

F O U R  
Useful Discourses:

V I Z.

- I. *The Art of Improving a full and prosperous Condition, for the Glory of G O D ; being an Appendix to the Art of Contentment : in Three Sermons on Philip I V. 12.*
- II *Christian Submission, on I Sam III. 18. pag: 76.*
- III. *Christ a Christian's Life ; and Death his Gain ; on Philip I. 21. pag: 104.*
- IV. *The Gospel of Peace sent to the Sons of Peace ; in Six Sermons on Luke X. 5, 6. pag: 128.*

---

By J E R. B U R R O U G H S,

Late Preacher of the G O S P E L at Stepney and Cripple-gate.

---

*Published by his hand who put forth some of his Books when Mr. BURROUGHS was living by his approbation, and most of those which came forth since his Death.*

---

L O N D O N,

Printed for Thomas Parkhurst, and sold at the Bible and Three Crowns Cheapside, and at the Table on London Bridge.

Emburgk. 8 Janus 1761 31<sup>te</sup> 10<sup>te</sup>

J. W. Laxen



T O T H E  
R E A D E R.

**I**T may too truly be said of the Ministers of Christ, that it often fares with the Births of their Brains, as with the Fruit of their Loyns; their Books have the same fate with their Children, who though well maintained, and much respected in the life time of their Parents; yet are afterwards exposed to neglect, and often to contempt; unless their own merits renew the lease of that which none could ever yet call inheritance. The *Posthumous Works* of the Servants of Christ, will (like helpless *Orphans*) suffer by the rough hands of violence and injury, unless they can redeem themselves at more than an ordinary rate of worth. Wherefore this Book, now put into thy hands, hath brought its redemption money with it for that purpose.

Though the *Name* alone of the *Author* (being among the *first Three*) might have gi-

*To the Reader.*

ven it a reputation in any Age but this, his *Works* having said that for him in the *Gate*, which Envy it self cannot gain-say: Yet notwithstanding it bids so high for the acceptation of all, by its own worth and excellency, that he must be condemned for a *Man* of *unexercised senses* in the matters of *good and evil*, that shall not embrace it upon its own terms.

The publishing the Labours of such Men of worth, is of an happy tendency to promote our communion with them in the *Spirit*, whom it may be we never saw in the *Flesh*; and it is to be reckoned among our mercies, when the dead are made to speak, that the living may be perswaded to hear: for this thou art indebted to the faithful pen of a ready Writer, whose indefatigable and (for ought I yet know) unparallel'd industry, hath already blessed the World with so many of the grateful labours of this servant of Christ, whose Name knows no rottenness.

*Stepney*

13 September 1675.

*M. M.*



## SERMON I.

---

PHIL. 4. 12.

*In all things I am instructed, both to be full, &c.*

**Y**OU may remember the last day we finished the Doctrine of *Christian Contentment*.

The close of that Point, it was the propounding several Considerations for *Christian Contentment*,  
And,

Secondly, We gave several Directions what to do, that we might have the exercise of the Grace of *Christian Contentment*:

And among all others, that's one special thing that then I commended, and still would but pick out, To name that concerns the power of God; and that is, The making of a good interpretation of Gods mercies and dealings towards them. Have good thoughts of God, and make good interpretations of what the dealings of God are towards you. It's very hard to live comfortably and cheerfully among friends, when one makes hard interpretations of the words and actions of another: The onely way to keep

sweet contentment and comfort in Christian Societies, and to make the best interpretation of things as we can. And so, a chief way and help to keep comfort and contentment in our hearts, is to make good interpretations of Gods dealing towards us.

But I would not look back to any thing that I have spoken concerning that Argument, but leave those things that have been delivered, to the blessing of God upon you; hoping that when any Temptation arises for Discontentment, that some truths that have been delivered, may come into your Minds: and that some of you may be able, when you see others discontented, as the Wife with the Husband, the Husband with the Wife, or one Brother or Friend with another, to make use of something out of the Text for this Grace of Contentment. For though we have been preaching a long time of it, yet it is longer a learning than it is a teaching; you need be longer time to learn it than I have been a preaching of it. It is not a few weeks that will learn it, we had need be years a learning this great Lesson.

Well; but now we are come to another lesson that is as hard to learn as this; and that is, *How to be full*. I have learned, saith he, how to be content in all Estates; *I am instructed how to be full*. Now this, though it be a hard lesson, yet because these times are times wherein that generally people suffer, and have not things so full as formerly; therefore I told you, I would not be so large upon this Argument as upon the other; that being more suitable: and yet because the truth is, we that live here, in comparison of our Brethren in other parts, though we be not so full as we have been, yet we may be said to be full; and the lesson will be useful and profitable (I hope) to us to learn how to be full, and it's the only way for  
God

God to hasten our fullness, if we be taught how to be full when it comes. I shall come to speak of this Lesson, *I am instructed how to be full* (saith the Apostle) any condition, either full or empty, any way. There's many people, they are neither well (as we use to say) full nor fasting. If they be in affliction, then they are froward and discontented; if they be in prosperity, there they are wanton; just like Children, if you let them not have what they would have, then they cry and are froward; and if you do let them have what they would have, then they are wanton; and so they are not in order any way. There are some of such cross and untoward dispositions, that in whatever condition they be put into, they are untoward. As I remember I have read of *Hannibal*, he said concerning *Marcellus*, *He can neither bear good nor ill fortune*; so he called it: That is, if he be conquered, he cannot tell how to bear that; no nor he cannot tell how to be a Conqueror. So there are some, having untoward hearts, are untoward in every state they are put into: But *Paul* by the work of the Grace of God, he was fitted for all estates; not only for affliction, but if God did will him prosperity, he could tell how to make use of that. A place somewhat parallel to this we have in the *2 Cor. 6. 8.* saith *Paul*, when he shews the different condition that he went through; *By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report.* Sometimes the Apostles had honour, sometimes they had dishonour; sometimes people reported well of them, and sometimes they reported ill of them; yet, saith he, we went through all, we carried on the work of the Gospel in all things: and so in the *10th. verse*, *As sorrowful, yet alwayes rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; &c. Whatever our condition were; yet through the grace of God we were carried through it; and so as to sancti-*



*sanctifie Gods name, and to further the Gospel in it.* Many men are fit for one condition; but they are not fit for another: But this was the excellency of the Grace of God in the Apostle; that he was fit for any condition; God might turn him to any thing. Now then, for the Lesson; of being full, that's our point.

Doct. *That a Christian is taught by God to know how to be full.* He learns this Lesson. There's many would be glad to hear of a lesson how they should get to be full; but to know how they should sanctifie Gods name in their fulness, this they think not so much needful. If I could preach a Sermon or two to you; to teach you all how you should get, how to supply your want, and be made full; I make no question but we should have very full Congregations: for such Sermons as these; To teach poor people how they should get to be rich, to teach those that are disgraced, how they should get to be honoured; to teach men how they should get good and prosperous voyages (and the like.) But I am teaching you a lesson as from God, or God rather than man, at this time; that is better, and is a better lesson; for one to know how to honour God in fullness, then it is to know how they should get to be full. And it were a good sign of truth of grace for you to judge this to be the better thing: That is, I had rather know how to honour God in what good thing I have, then to know wayes how to get more: I had rather know how I might behave my self in the enjoyment of those good things God hath given me, then to know how to get more of those good things. God hath given me some competent measure of estate, that my house hath a fulness in it; for I have all things needful. It may be you have not so much bravery as others have, but what do

do many of you want in your Houses, you have all kind of Household-stuffe that is needful for you, and convenient Diet that is needful for you. Then you are full, when you have things needful, though your Eye be not full. We use to say, It's better to fill a Childs Belly than his Eye. Perhaps your fancy is not full, but your necessity is supplied; and when the necessity of a Man or Woman is supplied, his condition may be said to be full: and therefore let not those that are in a poorer condition than others, think that this condition concerns not them. Thou hast not so much as others have, I but you have enough to keep you in health and strength, fitted for the service of God. Now that's a full condition.

Now we are to be taught this Lesson, How we should honour God in the fulness that God hath set any of us in; and I shall cast what I shall speak of this Lesson into these seven Heads; yet I intend to be but very brief in them, though they might take up as much time as the former Lessons have done. These are the seven Heads:

1. When may a Man be said to have learned how to be full. *I am instructed*, saith Paul, and know how to be full.
2. I shall shew you the difficulty of this Lesson.
3. The necessity of this Lesson, What great need there is that we should learn how to be full.
4. The Excellency of this Lesson, What an excellent thing it is for a Man to know how to be full. And then,
5. The Mystery of Godliness that there is in this Lesson. There is a Mystery in this as well as in the other.
6. What are the several Lessons that Christ doth learn at the soul that he doth learn how to be full. As I shewed you what were the several Lessons that Christ learns the Soul.



Soul that he learns to be content in want; so there are several Lessons that Christ doth teach the Soul, when he learns it how to be full. And then,

7. The Application of all. These are the seven Heads that I shall cast the matter into.

- I. For the first, When hath a Man learned how to be full? What do you mean, when you say that Christ doth teach his people to know how to be full? A Man hath learned how to be full, when he hath attained to these several particulars:

First, When a Man hath learned to set a due price on his fullness. When he hath learned to set a due price and value upon those mercies that God hath been pleased to grant unto him: When he can prize them, not too high nor too low, but as they are, those mercies that God grants him. A Man doth not learn to be full, when he doth not understand what the mercies are that God hath granted to him. As no man can attain to the grace of Christian Contentment that is stupid under affliction, he must understand his affliction, and know his affliction, or else he cannot come to Christian Contentment: so neither can We learn how to be full, except we know what the mercies are that God hath granted to us. If a man should enjoy many mercies, and doth not understand them, he is not taught how to be full; he must prize the mercy that God hath granted to him, at a due rate. As he must look upon (even these outward mercies) as the good blessings of God to him; he must not slight them; and he must look upon them as coming to him from the promise. Godliness hath the promise of this life, and the promise of the life to come; as a fruit of the promise of God to him, and as Gods goodness for the encouraging of him in the way of  
righteous

righteous God hath set him in. He must so look upon the outward things that he doth enjoy. He must look upon them as good Utensils (as I may so speak) as affording opportunity to do God service in the place where God hath set him: And so good things, in that regard he must prize them according to the due value of them. A man that flights Gods mercies and thinks there is little in them, he doth not know how to be full. But now, as he must not prize them at too low a rate, his Health and Estate, and Comfort that he hath; neither will he prize them at too high a rate; they are mercies, but they are but outward mercies: they come to me from Gods goodness, I but it's from Gods general Goodness. Though it's true, a Christian may look upon every mercy that he hath, as coming from another fountain than the ungodly; but yet the general goodness of God is enough to bestow the things themselves: For the matter of them, they are mercies, but they are but common mercies: Indeed I have them, but yet they are no other, but that a Reprobate may have as well as my self. They are good things, but they are not such good things as they make any one to be good. There are good things, that are not only given by God freely, but they do make those acceptable unto God, that God gives them. Here's the difference between all the good things that we are speaking of now, as the fullness of Estate, the outward Comforts of this world, and the things of Grace. Why the things of Grace are given by God freely, and they make those that they are given unto to be acceptable to God; they are such things as makes them to be good in Gods eye. But now, let God give never so much outward things, they make one to be never a whit the better in Gods eye. Though we say, Such a man is the best man in the Parish, yet certainly, such things makes

makes not a man the better. Grace makes a man or woman the better. But now, as the fulness of prosperity, it hath onely a goodnes in it so far as it makes them to be good, but grace that's good in its self. But now, these things are good as a man may have, and not good to him. If they be good to him, it must be from some goodnes that he hath himself; as he shall use them: that's the first thing. When a man shall come to know the true value of the fulness of his outward mercies, not prize them at too high a rate, nor at too low a rate; then he learns to be full: That's the first thing.

Secondly, Then doth a man learn to know how to be full, when he can tell how to make use of what he hath: when he can tell how to proportion the use of that fulness that God gives him. When he can tell how much will serve his turn for the use of it, and how little; and at what time to make use of such and such comforts of the creature, and how much use to make of them: then he hath learned how to be full. There's many men that when they have a fulness, First, They know not how to prize it, they know not the worth of it. Secondly, They know not how to make use of what they should, how much or how little, or at what time they should make use of the good things that God doth give unto them: so as they come to be excessive, yea defective in the enjoyment of what the Lord grants to them. Some are excessive, that because they have abundance of the Creature, they still are taking in of more than is any way useful to them for their fulness: They think that they may do what they will with their own. 'Tis not enough (my Brethren) because a man's Drink is his own, therefore to drink as much as he pleases; Or because his Meat is his own, therefore to eat as much as he will, and not to

to know how to order and moderate: Or because his Estate is his own, therefore to spend it as he list, in an excessive way. I remember for that, it was the answer of a Philosopher Zeno, when he did reprove an excessive Feasting: This was answered to him, *And why do you reprove it; he spends nothing but his own.* The Philosopher could answer thus, *Is this a good Answer, That you spend of your own; suppose you had a Cook that had a great deal of Salt, and he should put two or three handfuls into your Meat, for the seasoning of it; and being asks why he did so, he should answer, I had Salt enough; and the Salt did not cost much: there was enough in the place where I had it: or I can have more at an easie rate. Would this be a good Answer?* saith he. So, 'tis not enough, for to say, that our Estates are our own, and therefore we may be excessive in the use of the Creature. No; thou hast not learned how to be full, till thou hast learned how much will serve thy turn for thy use. It may be God gives thee a great deal of the Creature, but he intends that thou shalt not make use of it all for thy self. God gives thee so much a year, it is not because that thou shouldst spend it all upon thy own Back and Belly. Thou hast not learned how to be full, till thou hast learned how to proportion the use of thy Estate and outward Comforts that thou dost enjoy, according to thy need. Then doth a man learn, That though he be in the midst of abundance, yet he makes no more use of that he hath than is fit for him. Though a man be at a Feast where there are a great many Dishes, is it enough for him to say, There was a great deal of Cheer, and therefore for him to be a Glutton. Then doth a man know how to be temperate, when he is in the midst of a great many Dishes, and knows which is fittest for his Body, and feeds moderately on them. That's

the second thing, First, How to put a due valuation upon mercy, and then, Secondly, How to proportion the use of mercy, so much at such a time, and so much at another time. And then,

Thirdly, When a man can use the comforts of the Creature, and yet so as he is enabled to avoid the evil of the temptation that goes along with the Creature: As we shall shew afterwards, there are abundance of temptations that go along with fulness. Now then doth a man learn how to be full, when he can make use of the Creature; and yet still so as to deliver himself from the evil of those temptations that are joyned together with the Creature. And that's a wise man, a wise woman, that knows how to make use of all the comforts that God gives unto them, that they have any use of, and yet can tell how to avoid the temptations; can be able to distinguish between the good and the evil of temptation that doth cleave unto the good thing. You many times swallow down all, all is fish that comes to net; you think there is no temptation in the fulness that you have, but take it down without any consideration of what temptation may be joyned with the fulness. You are wiser with your selves other wayes. If you eat a Fish that is full of little bones, you will be picking out those little bones; you will not presently swallow it down in whole bitts: So you should consider, when God gives you fulness, O there may be many little bones together with it, yea, if you do not take heed, it may be wrapt up in such a skin, that may be bitterness to you, unless you pick out something. If you swallow it down whole, it may be a poyson to you. Now doth a man or woman know how to be full, when they can tell how to pick out the temptation; to enjoy the thing, and yet avoid the temptation. There are some, because they  
hear



hear there are many temptations in the enjoyment of the comforts of the Creature, they think there is no way but to fling away the Creature. As that *Aristippus*, because he saw that so many were hurt by their wealth, he cast his money into the Sea, saying, *I will drown you, lest you should drown me.* Now this is not to learn how to be full, that is, because I would avoid the temptation, not to enjoy the comfort and the blessing; as many men and women, through weakness and tenderness of conscience, being afraid that they shall get hurt by the use of the Creatures that God doth give them: Upon that they deny themselves abundance of comfort in the Creature that they should have. Now, though God may accept of their desires to honour him, and of their fearfulness of sinning against him; but yet this argues a great deal of weakness. The strength of a Christian is to enjoy Gods Creatures, to take the use of that that God doth afford, to take out the sweetness, and yet to avoid the temptation; to take away that that's good, and cast away that that is naught. As there's many kind of Meats, which you may not eat all of them; and a child, who must either have all or none; you will not give it meat that hath something mingled with it that is naught, because he knows not how to pick it out: But now, one that hath understanding, he knows how to pick out the good and fling away the naught; and not to fling it all away, because there's something that is naught as well as good. Now that's the third thing, and there's very few that understand this Lesson; but they must swallow down all, without thinking of any temptation that is annexed to the fullness that they do enjoy.

Fourthly, Then doth a man know how to be full, when he can have all that he doth enjoy, under his command,

and he can have the command of his own spirit in what he doth enjoy. As thus, when he is not a slave to what he hath, but he makes what he hath a slave to him. Some men that are rich, you say they have such possessions; the truth is, their possessions have them rather, than they their possessions; they are under their possessions. But now, Then a man knows how to be full, when all that he hath he makes his underling, he makes his servant; he makes it to be serviceable to him, and he can command any thing that he hath, according as there is use of it. He will never be a servant to his servant. It's a sordid disposition for any man or woman to be a servant to their servants; but now, to your Estates you will be a servant, they shall command you; and your Credit and you will be a servant. But it's a sign you know not how to be full. As a man doth not know how to rule, if he will be under his servant; so he doth not know how to be full, except he hath a command over what he doth enjoy in the world, yea and a command over his own spirit, in the use of what he doth enjoy. That's thus, When a man or woman can let out as much of his heart to the Creature as is useful, and no more; and can call it in again, when there is cause: As ordinarily people do not let out their spirits a little to joy, but they let them out, so as they have no command over their spirits; but they have lost the command of their spirits; they cannot call in their spirits again, to be serious and humble, and to be mourning for sin, when God calls them to it. As now, for instance, when you say you will be merry, and go and visit your friends, and have good cheer; God gives you leave to do so; if you know how to make use of this. But now, Do not you let out your hearts so far, as you cannot call them in again;



which you let them out so, that when you should come  
at night to go and humble your souls before God in pray-  
er, your hearts are light and vain, and you have no  
command over your spirits at all; and perhaps the next  
day you are worse for it. Its just with your hearts as  
with little Children; let them have but their wills a little  
while, and you shall have no rule over them for many  
dayes, many weeks after. So when you let your hearts  
have liberty a little while to rejoyce in the Creature,  
you have little command over your hearts for many weeks  
after. Now you may be merry, Religion keeps not one  
from mirth, but yet so as to have a command over our  
spirits; that I can call my heart in again, when there is  
occasion. I will rejoyce in the Creature, I but I will re-  
serve my chief joy for something else, there is some-  
thing else that I am as rejoyces in, more than in the use  
of the Creature. If you let out your heart so, when  
you rejoyce in the Creature, as you make it your chief  
joy, your onely joy; your joy is not right. But it is not  
so with the heart that knows how to be full.

Fifthly, Then hath a man or woman learned how to be  
full, when they can so use the creatures of God, as yet  
they are in a readines to part with all their comforts, if  
God will call for them. If I enjoy comfort, but in such a  
manner as my heart lies down before God ready prepared  
to give up those comforts that I do enjoy, whenever God  
will have me: Then I have learned to be full. When a man  
or woman shall have their hearts taken so with the Crea-  
ture, as they cannot leave them, whatever comes of  
them. They must preserve their Estate, now having had  
full Estates; and lived full handed; they cannot live mean-  
ly, rather venture upon sin of any thing in the world, to  
upreserve their Estates.

o how is it possible for a man as  
bath

both had faith bringing up as I (saith one) ~~was to be made~~  
~~strait~~ ~~that I am~~ ~~straitened~~ ~~have bread~~ ~~and upon~~ ~~the~~  
 hearts of men rather than they will come to part with the  
 comforts of the Creature, when God would have them;  
 they will keep them, as it were, whether God will or no.  
 O, thou hast not learned how to be full. If thy heart  
 were right in thy fulness, thou wouldst take the comfort  
 of the Creature, when God gives them. But Lord, if  
 thou hast use of them, any other way, here I am, do  
 with me what thou pleasest. The Lord gives, and the  
 Lord takes, and blessed be the Name of the Lord. I'll  
 take them as long as thou wilt have me, and when thou  
 wilt sanctifie thy Name in my want, Lord take them. We  
 are too eager upon the Creature when our hearts cleave to  
 it and we cannot be taken from it, without the roading of  
 our hearts. It is with many mens Spirits, as it is with the  
 Bee, when it comes to sting, it thrusts its sting so fast  
 that it cannot get it out, but leaves it there: So our hearts  
 are so riveted into the Creature, that we cannot part  
 with the Creature, and when God would take away the  
 Creature from us, it is as dear unto us. ~~Ch. 1~~ And that's  
 the reason that people do so cry out, and complain that  
 they are undone, and wring their hands, if they have but  
 lost any part of their Estates, though they have a great  
 part still remaining. Oh how they wring their hands, as if  
 they were undone. Oh thou didst not learn, when thou  
 wert full, how to be full. That man or woman that is  
 immoderately sorrowful, when God takes away the Crea-  
 ture from them, did never learn how to be full; that is,  
 to know how to be full: when we can tell how to enjoy  
 them, and how to be without them. O, think of this  
 when you are at your full Tables. Now I have all things  
 about me, but can I now, if God should call me to  
 suffer

suffer poverty, could I be content to be laid in a Prison for his Name sake? ~~and~~ he could; when he was at the fullest, readily come off! O Lord, if thou wilt honour thy self by me, in a Prison, or Poverty, or Disgrace, why Lord, here I am: He was ready prepared: And know, that you have not learned how to be full, except you can find your hearts in the midst of your fulness; to be ready prepared to part with all your fulness for Jesus Christ. Now in the very naming of these things, I suppose you all think this is a hard lesson; you think it's hard for poor people to know how to want; that's hard, but the truth is, it's rather the harder of the two to know how to be full. That's the fifth thing, when a man knows how to be full.

Sixthly, Then doth a man know how to be full, when he can make all his fulness to be furtherance of his graces, to act his graces, to exercise his graces, to draw forth his graces: As now, when he can make the fulness that he hath, to be a means to act and draw forth the grace of Love; to love God in all his fulness: Not so much to love the Creature, as to love God in the Creature. When he can make his fulness to be a means to help his faith: Thus, Lord, thou hast said, *That godliness hath the promise of this life and the life that is to come*; why Lord thou hast made thy promise good unto me, and so it strengthens my faith: When a mans fulness can exercise the grace of Charity to others: When a mans fulness can exercise his grace of heavenly mindedness; as in this manner, O Lord, *These comforts that thou givest me in thy creatures, O they are sweet; but how sweet is thy self! how sweet is Jesus Christ, that is the fulness of all this fulness!* And if so be that this life be so sweet here in this world; what hast thou then in the heavens, to make me

to long after heaven. Then a man hath learned how to be full, when he knows how to exercise his graces by his fulness; that that which deads the graces of other men, shall be a means to exercise his graces.

Seventhly, And so I might make that another consideration. When this fulness doth lead him to the fountain of his fulness; that is, when his grace leads him to God, to acknowledge him in all, and to be thankful to God in all; when it stirr up his thankfulness to God; and when it encourages him in the duties that God doth require of him. O I receive much wages, saith a gracious heart; I receive much from God, then surely there must needs be much work required at my hands. I receive more than others do, and therefore it is fit that I should do more work than others do. Thus a Christian learns to be full, when it can further his graces, and carry him to God, that is, the fountain of all his fulness.

Eighthly, Then a Christian learns to be full, when he can improve and lay out all his fulness for God. I use it, I but I do not use it for my self so much as for God. When I can consider what are the opportunities of service that God grants unto me in this my fulness. Doth not God give unto me a larger opportunity of service than unto others; O then let me improve it for publick work. Perhaps I am made a publick man, whereas others that are poor, that are fit for publick service as well as I, in regard of their gifts and graces, but because of their Estate they cannot be employed in publick work as I. Now I will improve my fulness in publick work, that I may be a useful man in the place where God hath set me; that I may be as full of good works as possibly I can; that I may be a publick blessing to the place where the Lord hath cast me. Why then doth a man learn to be full. And then,

Ninthly

Ninthly, When a man doth so use the world as if he used it not. When a man enjoys his fulness of outward things, but as things by the by; that is, so as his comforts doth not depend upon them. I have comfort in them, but it doth not depend upon them. Most people do so enjoy their fulness, that the truth is they have it as all their fulness; they do not use them as things by the by, but as their end. Not as *means* to the end, but as their end. Then a man learns to know how to be full (I say) when he can use his fulness, not as his end, but means to the end: Not as things that he doth depend upon for his happiness, but as things by the by. Put all these together now, and here's the man that learns to be full. And thus *St. Paul*, I am instructed as well to be full and rich, as to need. O I beseech you, before this can come to be applied in the whole, apply these particulars to your hearts. In the mean time, I appeal this day in the Name of God to your Conscience; Have you learned to be full? You are full many of you, as to outward things; but have you been in Christs School, to learn to enjoy your fulness in such a manner as this is: I am verily perswaded that many of your Consciences will cause mis-giving thoughts to be in you this day about this thing, if you do believe that these are the truths of God, as I cannot imagine but any man may be convinc'd of this; and therefore I do not stand to enlarge and bring proofs for them: but every mans conscience will tell him, certainly I have not learned these things. I have not learned to be full; that is, I have not learned to sanctifie the Name of God by my fulness. Now give conscience liberty to reprove you for being Truant in the School of Jesus Christ; and let this humble your souls before the Lord. I shall speak more to that afterwards; but for the present, know, that this is your work, to go and



be humbled before the Lord, that you have not understood what it is to sanctifie God in the fulness that you enjoy. Lord, Through thy mercy I have all my dayes been full of outward comforts; Thou hast been full-handed towards me, in the wayes of thy mercy: but Lord, though I have had fulness a long time, O how far have I been from knowing how to be full. If this be to know it, then I have been a stranger to it hitherto.

Tenthly, A man doth know how to abound, when he knows how to make use of the Comforts he doth enjoy of the world; so as not to be hindered by the afflictions or troubles that doth attend his Comforts. In mens abounding and being full of comforts in this world; they cannot but have some affliction and some troubles attending these comforts; for all Creature comforts are mingled comforts: Now then, Then a man knows rightly how to be full, when he enjoys his fulness, so as though he hath some affliction mixed, yet he can tell how to make use of his affliction for his humiliation, and his comforts for thanksgiving unto God at the same time: whereas now abundance of people when they enjoy comfort, if they meet with any trouble and affliction mixed with their comfort, they are filled so with vexation and bitterness, and their spirits are so troubled, that they lose all the good of their comforts: As *Haman*, he did abound, but he did not know how to abound; therefore when he was but crossed in one thing, that *Mordocay* did not bow the Knee to him, why all the comfort of his prosperity was taken away, and his spirit was filled with rage and bitterness, and malice. And thus it is with many people, that have abundance in their Families; they are full of outward comforts, they have their Yoke-fellows, comfortable Children; they have Estates, they have

have their Tables furnished, and all things that one would think might content the heart of a man almost: But now, if any one cross doth fall out that doth displease them, they are put into such a vexation and fretting humour, as they lose all the benefit of the comforts. Do'st thou know how to abound, when as thou goest abroad and something crossest thee, or thy Servant doth something amiss, why presently thou art in a rage and fretting, and all thy thanksgiving to God for all thy mercies, that's forgot. Nothing but fretting and ~~mixing~~ in the Family for one cross, when as there are a hundred mercies that thou shouldest bless God for. Thou dost not know how to ro abound, when thou canst not tell how to sever the good of mercy, from the consideration of affliction: And though God doth afflict thee in something, yet he gives thee abundance of occasions to bless him and praise him. But now, when thou canst bless God for all mercies, and be humbled for all afflictions at the same time; If God doth grant me more mercies then affliction, he shall have more thanksgiving from me then sorrow, or then trouble; He have more joy then I will have trouble, if I have more mercy then I have correction. This man knows how to abound, that can do thus then.

Eleventhly, lastly, That man knows how to abound, that in his abundance yet knows himself. Such a man or woman knows how to be full, and to abound (I say) that if they are full and abound, yet they know themselves. Its ordinary for people not to know themselves, when once they come to abound. *Saul* was little in his own eyes when he was in a mean estate, but when *Saul* came to abound he knew not himself: And so it hath been ordinary with people, that their abundance hath taken away the very knowledge of themselves;



they have grown wanton and foolish and proud, that they have not known themselves when they have abounded. But now, when a man in the midst of abundance knows his own meanes, and wretchedness, and sinfulness, and vile-ness, notwithstanding his abundance; here's a man that hath learned this lesson of the Apostle, how to abound. But this is a very difficult lesson. If there be such things as as these in learning how to abound, surely the lesson must needs be difficult. You that are Mariners think if you have Sea-roume enough you are safe; you care not then: but it's otherwise in this that we are speaking of, your Sea-roume may be your undoing; and the more abundance you have, the more difficult it will be for you to know how to order your selves in your way. I gave divers reasons why this lesson was more difficult then the other; to know how to be full than to be empty; which few people in the world will think so, but certainly it is so.

Now though the very naming of these things may shew the difficulty of it, yet we shall come in the Second place, to shew that there's a great deale of difficulty in Mens and Womens knowing how to be full: And I name this the rather, because I would put your hearts upon exercise, that you may not lightly pass over what is said, when we speak of knowing how to be full; for it is ordinary for Men, that have estates and outward comforts, to slight the Word. Well, Let me have what will satisfie me, and for this lesson, to know how to be full, I hope we shall do well enough for that. Now for this, that you may not slight the lesson; I shall shew you something about the difficulty of it.

You that are Marriners, If you may have Sea-roume enough, you care not; you think then you can do well enough, but though you can do well enough in your Art, when

when you have Sea-roume; yet the truth is, you do the worst for your selves, when you have the greatest Sea of prosperity, there you do worst of all; and it is your Sea-room that doth undo you: I mean the abundance of outward prosperity, it is that ordinarily which doth undo men. So it is easier a great deal, you know, for one to manage a little Boat in the *Thames*, then for one to be able to manage an *East-Indian Ship*. The truth is, less skill will serve for the ordering of a mans estate when it is low and mean in the world, than when he comes to be full. It were a mad thing for a man that can but onely row in the *Thames*, to undertake the command of one of your greatest Ships. And so it is for those that are mean, if God doth not teach them how to be full, they are like to undo themselves by their fulness as well as any way. It is easier for a man to manage a little estate that he hath, then for him to manage great merchandizing. There is more difficulty and skill required in fulness, than in other wayes; as extremity of heat is harder to bear than cold: though it be very cold, yet by exercise we may get our selves a heat: but when it is extream hot weather, that's very tedious, and it breeds diseases. And so it is easier to carry a Cup that is but half full steadily, than to carry a Cup that is brim-full. And a Traveller (you know the expression) the storm and the tempest makes him to get his Cloak closer together, and to hold it faster: but when the warm beams of the Sun comes and shines upon him, that makes him cast off his Cloak. You know the Fable of the Sun and the Wind to get the Travellers Cloak, which should do it; when the Wind came blustering, that could not do it; but the warm Sun beams, that made him throw it off. So many times those that can hold fastest in the time of adversity, yet in the time of prosperity they lose

lose the seeming graces that they had before; and so let all go.

Now there are divers reasons that I should give you why it is thus difficult to learn this lesson; as,

First, Because we are most of us flesh, we are more flesh than spirit of our selves: Now because we have so little spirit in us, therefore all those things that shall come for to joyn with the flesh (I do not now speak of corruption) but to joyn with our natural part and sensual part, we having so little spirit in us, it must needs be dangerous for us to manage those things that joyn with our natural part, that is flesh, though it were not corrupt; yet because we have so little spirit. That is, First, We have lost the Image of God. The best of us have but little of the Image of God, others have lost it quite; and then our very reason is wounded by our fall: therefore having so little strength in our spirits, all those things that come to joyn with the flesh, do very much endanger us; and do indeed very much weaken our better part. Now adversity, that pulls from the flesh, that takes from the flesh; and many times the spirit is much the stronger; but what doth add to the strength of the flesh, doth endanger us: as it is more dangerous to set a Child upon a pamper'd Horse, than upon a Horse that is wearied out with work: And so for us that are weak in our spirits, to have our flesh to be pampered and satisfied; I now speak but of our natural flesh and sensual part, to be pampered and fully satisfied, there's a great deal of danger in that.

And then farther, In prosperity there are more duties required than in adversity. A man that is in a mean estate and condition, there are not so many duties required of him; but a man that enjoys a fulness, there's abundance of duties required of such a man; every comfort that he

enjoys is an obligation to some special duty. A poor man that works hard at his dayes labour, he hath nothing to do but to bless God when he comes into his Family, and look to his own heart; and to see that the service of God is in his Family: But now, take a man that is full, that is of an estate in the world; God requires of him to look abroad in the publick; and God gives him charge, Look that my Worship beset up, look that Justice be executed, I will require these things at your hand; look that my Sabbath be not prophand, look that Godliness be countenanced, look that Sin is discountenanced.

But perhaps you will say, Every man that is rich, he is not a Justice of Peace, or in place.

I but by your countenance you may make friends to this and the other; every one is tied to be a friend to those that are rich. There are a great many duties that lie upon you, that do not lie upon those that are poor. If indeed a man that had an estate, had nothing else to do but to sit by the fire side, and have his servants to bring him his provision; if this were all to be full, it were easie for a man to know how to be full: but you must know that there is much more lies upon you then so, which you must answer for, and give an account of before God; now this is the thing that makes the difficulty.

And then the third thing is, The variety of Temptations that do attend upon a full condition: O abundance of temptations there are in a full estate, more than there are in a mean estate. I confess extream poverty hath many temptations with it, very fore and grievous temptations that do attend extremity of poverty; but yet not so many as do attend upon a full estate. As the flies come in abundance to sweet things, honey (and the like) so

*Belzebub*

*Belzebub*, that signifies the God of Flies; O the Devils that have that name, they come in abundance, where they see sweetness, where they see is much prosperity. Rats and Mice come to full Barns, not to empty ones; and so the Vermin of temptations, as I may call them, do attend upon full estates. A Tree that hath nothing on it, the Traveller that comes by will not sling at it; but a Tree that is full of fruit, a Traveller slings at that: so those that are in a mean and low condition, the Devil passes by them, but he especially labors at those that he sees hath much of the world, and he hath more hopes of gaining of them: As it's a very observable place concerning *Joseph*, do but consider the Scripture that speaks of the condition of *Joseph* and his Blessing; we may compare two Scriptures together for it, the one is in the Book of *Genesis*, where you have *Jacob* blessing of *Joseph*; and the other is in the Book of *Deuteronomy*, where *Moses's* Blessing was, *chap. 33. 13.* and of *Joseph* he said, *Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven; for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath: And for the precious fruits brought forth by the Sun, and for the precious things put forth by the Moon, and for the chief things of the ancient Mountains; and for the precious things of the lasting hills; and for the precious things of the earth, and fulness thereof, &c.* Here's for all his outward blessings, what a many precious things are here, that *Joseph* had, and the fulness thereof. But mark, of all the Tribes, what is said concerning *Joseph*, *Gen. 49. 22.* *Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a Well; whose branches run over the wall.* But now mark in the 23. verse, *The Archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him.* There's none of the Tribes, where it is said, that the Archers did so shoot at, as at *Joseph*; and there



there is none of the Tribes that is blessed with so many several pretious things as *Joseph* is blest withal. So that by comparing these two Scriptures, you see, that those that have most of the pretious things of this world, they are like to be shot at most; and the Devil shoots at them more then he doth at others.

And then, as the variety of temptations is greater, so the suitableness of temptations is more; the Devil can prevail more in his temptations with fulness, than where there is want and emptiness; why, because though there be temptations in a poor condition, yet they are not so pleasing to a mans own nature as the temptations of a full condition. A poor man is tempted, but what is he tempted to, he is tempted to impatience, but that's no pleasing thing but a tedious thing; and he is tempted to despair, but that hath no pleasingness with it; and he is tempted to take shifting courses, I but there's fear in that, least he should be discovered and so be punished: So that their temptations that are in poverty, are not so suitable to their nature, as the temptations of one that is in a full estate; for his estate is a temptation to pride, to uncleanness, a temptation to intemperance: Now such things are very suitable to the very nature of a man, therefore there's a great deal more danger in the temptations that comes by fulness than by want, because the temptations of one are tedious to a mans nature; but the temptations of the other are suitable to a mans nature. As it's more dangerous to have Rats-bane lie about the house for your children, than to have Aloes or Wormseed: Suppose that Aloes had a poyson in it, it's true it may do hurt, but it's not so likely as Rats-bane; because though Rats-bane hath poyson in it, yet it hath sweetness in it too. There is poyson sometimes in a poor condition,

that is, there are temptations to great evils in a poor condition; I but their temptations have a bitterness in them. But the temptation of a full condition hath a sweetness in them; and therefore there's a greater danger in them, and more difficulty to avoid those temptations.

And then further, The temptations that come from fulness, they are more subtle; those that come from want they are not so subtle, they are more apparent; but the temptation lies in fulness for the most part in lawful things, it is in lawful things that we most fail in. And the temptation comes so fairly, why, why may not a man take liberty to comfort himself in Gods Creatures, may not a man take his own, may not a man make use of his own? For the most part (I say) all the temptations of fulness, or great part of them, lies in things that seem to have no hurt in them; and therefore they are very subtle, and a man need be very wary of them: they are (as we said before upon occasion) like little bones in the Fish that you can hardly see them, and therefore there's a great deal more danger in swallowing of them down, then of other prickly things. And so the temptations of a full estate lies very secret; it's very hard to see them unless you look very narrowly.

And then further, which is a main thing; because fulness doth not onely afford a temptation to sin, but fewel for all kinds of lust; fulness will feed them if you have not learned to be full. As now, If a man hath the lust of pride, there he hath enough to act his pride, he will feed it to the full; and will make a proud man to be a scornful man: so that he will scorn and jeer, not onely at his Brethren, but at God, and his truth, and Ministers, and Religion, and all because he is full; his



his pride is so fed to the full. And fulness of estate it will feed self-love extreemly. When a man hath a kind of self-sufficiency in himself, then he sees no need that he hath of God, nor Christ, nor Mercy, nor of the Word and Promises. It feeds his Malice, if he hath a malicious spirit against another man, he can undo him, and he can spend so much to have his will; it feeds his Stubbornness. If he will be unclean, he can, and who will meddle with such an one. And it will feed his Licentiousness, he can take his liberty and ride up and down from place to place. A poor man hath as much mind perhaps to satisfy his lusts, but he must fall to his work, or else his family will starve: I but a man that is full, he hath elbow-room enough to serve his lusts, and he can go abroad in the morning and stay till midnight; and spend from the beginning of the week to the end of it, and not want. O this is mighty pleasing to flesh, and this feeds a mans lusts, and makes him strong. And this is the reason why there are so few that are full, that ever the Word doth good upon. Ordinarily the poor receive the Gospel, so the Scripture saith; *Not many rich, not many mighty, not many great ones.* Why here's the reason of it, because they have so much matter to feed their lusts withal, that their lusts grows too strong, that it doth resist the Word, resists all means that should do them any good; and therefore it's a very hard lesson for a man to learn to know how to be full. And that that shews it to be a hard lesson, also shews it to be a necessary lesson. O Lord what case is a man in then that is full, and yet for all that hath not learned to be full. If he hath such matter for his lusts, and knows not how to order himself, he is like to be a lost man.

There is one thing more why it is so difficult to learn how to abound, and that's this, Because that a full estate is in danger to hinder those Graces that are the especial Graces of a Christian. The Graces of a Christian that are the most peculiar and proper graces of a Christian, are in an exceeding danger by a prosperous estate; that if a man doth not learn to abound, those graces will especially be hurt; and it is very difficult for a man or woman to carry themselves in an even course; so as when there is (as it were) siege laid to those graces that are the special graces of a Christian.

As thus, The graces of a Christian are Faith, Self-denial, Humility, Patience, Tenderneſs, and ſuch kind of graces as theſe are. Now a prosperous estate doth mightily endanger theſe graces.

As now, *Faith*, you know the nature of that grace is for one to be emptied of himſelf, and to be nothing of himſelf; and for to rely upon that that is without. This is the grace of Faith, To be taken from our own bottom, from our ſelves, and from the Creature; to caſt our ſelves upon free grace, upon the goodneſs and mercy of God, upon the righteouſneſs of another. But now, when men abound, and have a fulneſs in themſelves, why 'tis very natural for them to depend upon themſelves and not upon another. A full eſtate hinders very much the depending life, which is the life of a Chriſtian. I the life of a Chriſtian is a more depending life then the life of *Adam* was: and therefore a low condition is more ſuitable to a depending life, then a full condition.

And ſo for ſelf-denial, One that is in a low condition, it's eaſier for ſuch a one to deny himſelf: But now, when one comes to have much of ſelf, and to have ſelf to be cockered (as it were) then yet to deny a mans ſelf,

self, and to be nothing in his own eyes, this is a great deal harder.

And so for Humility, It's not so much for one that is poor, and in a low condition to have his heart low, but to have his heart low when his estate is high, that's the difficulty. You know there's nothing more natural to men, then to have their hearts rise as their estates rise; as the comforts of the creatures rises, so their hearts will rise; and therefore it's hard to learn this lesson, How to be full.

And then that grace likewise of Tenderneſs, of a tender heart, a soft heart, that's a grace that belongs to a Christian in a special manner; that they should keep constantly tender, soft spirited. Now though many in time of Affliction have their hearts tender and soft, yet when they come to prosper once, then their hearts are hard; the prosperity of the world doth bake (as it were) their hearts, and hardens their hearts. As the Sun doth harden the Clay, so prosperity doth harden the hearts of men, and takes away that tenderneſs as was wont to be (as might be shewn in many examples.)

---

## S E R M O N I I.

**I** Shall now give unto you some further evidences of this, that it is a very difficult lesson to know how to abound. The evidences are,

First, The solemn and frequent charges of God to his people, To take heed to themselves when they are full.

We

We do not find in Scripture that God doth so solemnly and frequently charge people to take heed to themselves when they are low; that they don't *then* forsake him: though there are some Commands that way, but nothing so much in such a solemn way as God doth when he speaks to those that are like to be in a full condition; then saith God, *Look to your selves*; as I'll give you two or three Scriptures. The first is in *Deut. 6. 11.* there God saith what he would give unto them, *They should have houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not; Vineyards and Olive-trees which thou plantedst not. When thou shalt have eaten and be full (saith the Text) what then? Then beware lest thou forget the Lord, which brought thee forth out of the Land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.* That's a time when people are least careful at all, when they eat and be full, then they think of no danger at all; I but this is the charge of the Spirit of God, That when thou shalt have eaten and be full, *then* beware in a more especial manner. O that you would remember this, you that have full Tables; O that this Scripture were written over your Tables, and were in your thoughts when you come to full Dishes; you eat and drink and are full. It would be but a melancholy thought to some of you to think of this, O I must beware now in a more especial manner. Some of you that have been in a poor estate, perhaps you were but poor Sea-boys at first; but in some few Voyages have raised up an estate: then this is a Text that concerns you. *Hath God given you such Voyages, that now your house is full; you were wont to have your houses empty, but ordinarily you Marriners have your houses full of good things that you bring from beyond Sea. Now when your houses are full, saith the Text, beware of that, that you forget*

forget not the Lord; but then fear him. And so in *Dent.* 8. 12. you have again this charge renewed, the Lord doth not give it you once, but presently again he renews this charge; *When (saith he) thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God, for the good land which he hath given thee. Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his Commandments and his Judgments and his Statutes, which I command thee this day; least when thou hast eaten, and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy Gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied: then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy Gods. Still see what charges are here, as if God should say, I am not so solicitous about you, while you are in the Wilderness, while you are empty; but I am very solicitous about you, what you will do when you are full; I am afraid then you will forget me: Therefore you see how it is renewed: yea, you have it renewed again in *Dent.* 11. 15. And (saith he) *I will send grass in thy field for thy cattel, that thou mayest eat and be full. Take heed to your selves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside and serve other Gods. Take heed you be not deceived when you are full. There is a great deceitfulness in riches; so you know the Scripture speaks of the deceitfulness of Riches. You will say, why when we are full, we hope we may eat and drink, and have the pleasure of what God gives us. O but take heed you be not deceived. Now that God should give such caution and solemn charges again and again, in the 6th. 8th. and 11th. Chapters, and so repeat them again and again; surely by this God would have us to learn that there is a great deal of danger in being full; and therefore it is a difficult lesson for us to know how to be full and abound.* Ano-*



Another evidence that it is so difficult, is this; When do you find throughout all the Book of God, that ever a full condition did ever turn any soul to God, or was the means of it, that was not turned to God before. I can find in Scripture that an afflicted condition hath been blest so by God, as it hath been an occasion to turn some to God: As you know *Manasses* in his affliction he sought the Lord. And so God speaks once and twice, and men hear not; but then he opens their ears by correction: *And in their affliction they will seek me early*: But do you ever find it, that those that did not seek God before, were drawn to God by a full condition. Truly I know no certain example of any, where the prosperous estate of a man was any occasion to his conversion: therefore that shews that there is a great deal of danger in a fuller condition.

Yea further, Where do you find that any of Gods children that were brought into a full condition, but were rather worse for it than better. I confess there is one or two examples, that we read not that they were worse for their prosperity; as *Nehemiah* and *Daniel*: but where have you an example else, but almost all of them, when they were full, they forgot God. When they were afflicted, they would learn; *David* had learned to be content in his afflicted condition, and to get abundance of good by his afflicted condition; O but he could not learn so well to be full. And therefore you shall find that the most excellent Psalms that ever *David* penn'd, it was in his afflicted condition: There was a fulness of the spirit of God in him then, then in a more especial manner: And therefore I remember that it's said in one place, That *Solemon* did not do according to the first works of his Father *David*. The first works of *David* were the works when

when *David* was not so full; but when he grew to be full, his works were not so good then. And generally all the people of God were worse in a full condition: So *Solomon*, you know how his fulness had almost spoil'd him; *Solomon*, though he had so much wisdom that he understood all things almost, yet he wanted wisdom to know how to be full. There was never a man of that greatness in the world (that was a meer man) that had the wisdom as *Solomon* had; and yet all his wisdom was not enough to teach him this lesson, to know how to be full.

And then, This is an evidence that it's a very difficult thing to learn to be full; because that the way of God constantly hath been, even from the beginning of the world to this day, to keep his people down low in affliction; and especially in the times of the Gospel. Now why is it that the Lord hath so ordered things in the wayes of his providence, as that the most part of his Churches and his Saints, should be kept under the hatches, under afflictions. Why God could as easily fill them with fulness of outward blessings, as fill them with the Holy Ghost; but those that God fills with the Holy Ghost, yet he doth not fill them with outward blessings, in his ordinary way; but the people of God have been in afflictions. This is an evidence to us that God sees that it is more safe for them to be in a mean estate than in a high, because they can better learn how to be empty than to be full. The Lord sees it's a hard lesson for his people to learn how to be full, and therefore he doth but very rarely bring them into a full condition.

And daily experience teaches it too, who are those that are the most spiritual and heavenly Christians, are they those that are fullest? We see it plainly otherwise.

Q God hath a great deal more glory from poor mean Christians, and there is more spiritual Communion between God and them, than there is between God and those that are in a fuller estate. The Ecclesiastical Story is notable for this, I suppose you have heard of; That at the time when the Church was delivered from persecution, and *Constantine* had endowed it with great possessions, the Story saith, there was a voice heard in the Air, saying, *This day is poyson poured into the Church.* And so it fell out indeed, for the Church grew far worse after it was delivered from persecution. It was in a worse condition by far, then it was when it was under persecution; they could not learn to be full, so as they could learn to be afflicted and empty: then they fell to contending and wrangling one with another; and then Heresies began to prevail a great deal more than they did when they were under persecution; and we find it so by our experience. Is it not so, that when we are lowest, then we are in the best condition for the most part; for as soon as we have prosperity and are full, we begin to spurn with the heel. But I have spoken to that at other times. And thus much for that second particular, That it is a very difficult lesson to learn to be full.

But yet it is very necessary, there is a kind of absolute necessity of it, a great necessity. Why, many wayes there is need of this, and it would be a very sad thing, if you do not learn this lesson.

Eor, First, Those that are full, if they have not learned how to be full, they will be guilty of the abuse of the Creatures of God more than other men; the Creatures of God that they enjoy in a fuller way than others, will be under bondage, and will cry out against them: So, do not you enjoy a great many Creatures more than others that

that are in a poor condition. But if thou hast not learned how to use them for God, night and day do these Creatures of God cry to heaven against thee: as if they should say, Lord, we were made for thee, and we have a propensity in us to be serviceable to thy glory; but here's one to whom thou hast given the possession of us, and he doth abuse us, and force us from the end that thou hast made us for; and that we would fain be useful in. Lord, we are forced to do that that is contrary to our nature, we were never made to be serviceable to the lusts of men, and yet here's a man that doth abuse us to his lusts: Lord why should we be in bondage to such men as know not how to use us. You love not to be a servant to one that knows not how to use you. The Creatures of God they groan under the bondage they are in, when men and women enjoy them in the fulness of them, and yet abuse them; not working them to the end that God hath made them for: there is a cry that God hears from his Creatures, though you hear not the voice of it.

Yea, and Secondly, If you be in a prosperous condition, and have not learned to be full, then you will be guilty of sinning against mercy more than others; the mercies of God towards you will be but an aggravation to your sinfulness; and this is a grievous condition. O Mercy, my Brethren, is a tender thing, and to sin against mercy is very grievous. Those that are in a low condition, they have many mercies, but not so many as you; therefore they are not guilty of sinning against mercy so much as you are. What a sad thing is this, that Gods mercy, that might do us so much good, should be of no other use to us, but meerly to aggravate our sins at last. There's no greater aggravation of sin than that that comes from mercy;

mercy ; and therefore when the Lord would speak to the very heart of his people , so as to perswade , he brings them to that , to consider of his mercy towards them. In *Deut. 32. 6.* *Do you thus requite the Lord , O foolish people and unwise.* So , Dost thou thus requite the Lord , hath God made thy condition more comfortable than anothers ? Another he wants Bread , and fares hardly , lies hard , and is in the cold ; and lives in a poor condition , and thou hast all things full about thee , and yet art thou worse ? Dost thou thus requite the Lord , O foolish heart ? And so you know it was the aggravation of the sin of *David* , in *2 Sam. 12.* after *David* had committed that great sin , the Lord sends the Prophet to him to convince him of his sin ; and mark how he aggravates it *ver. 7.* *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel , I annointed thee King over Israel , and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul , and I gave thee thy Masters House , and thy Masters Wives into thy bosome ; and gave thee the House of Israel and of Judah , and if that had been too little , I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things : Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord ?* O this was that that struck the heart of *David* ; *I have sinned* , saith *David* . And in *Nchem. 9. 25, 26.* you have a remarkable Scripture for that , setting out there the mercy of God ; *so they did eat and were filled , and became fat , and delighted themselves in thy great goodness ; nevertheless they were disobedient and rebelled against thee ; and cast thy Law behind their backs , and slew thy Prophets , &c.* Here's the aggravation , they were filled with good things , nevertheless they were disobedient. O may not this Scripture be made good upon many of you. The Lord hath filled your houses with abundance of mercy , you cannot look into any of your Families , but you see mercy ; yet nevertheless



vertheless a carnal heart for all this, nevertheless a Swearer, a Company-keeper, a Profanier of Sabbaths, a Neglector of the Worship of God in thy Family. Notwithstanding, an unclean wretch, for all those mercies that the Lord would wooe thee to obedience by. That's the second thing that shews the necessity of learning to be full, otherwise we shall be guilty of sinning against much mercy; and likewise the mercy of God will serve for no other end but to aggravate our sin.

And, Thirdly, If men do not learn to be full, they will grow extream wicked. How our fulness doth afford fuel for lusts, that we spoke to. I onely now speak to it, as to shew the necessity that we learn to be full; lest we come to grow most abominably wicked. Sin will come to be out of measure sinful, if so be we learn not to be full. As a man that hath a weak distempered body, and lives at a full Table, and hath a strong appetite, and yet if he doth not learn how to order his diet, he will grow full of Diseases; so when thy heart is weak (at least) and thou comest to a full Diet, and knowest not how to order thy self, thou art like to grow extreamly diseased; and therefore you find in Scripture, that those that were in a full condition, and yet had not grace to know how to be full, they are described to be the most wicked people that are in the world. *Job 21. 14. Therefore they say unto God, depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy wayes.* And in *Psal. 73.* there you may read at large of the prosperity of the wicked; from the beginning and so on; and in *Isai. 2. 7, 8. Their land also is full of silver and gold, neither is there any end of their treasures; their land is also full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots;* then mark in the 8th. verse, *Their land also is full of Idols.* These two are joynd together. O  
so

so it is in many Families, this Family is full of all outward good things, and it's a Family full of sin; and here's a man that hath a full Estate, and a man that is full of sin, as he is full of his Estate. If thou dost not learn to abound, thou wilt certainly abound in sin; and therefore it is an absolute necessary lesson for us to learn to abound.

And then, Thirdly, If thou dost not learn to abound, thy portion will be in this life, if there doth not go together with thy abundance the grace of God to teach thee how to abound; this will prove to be thy condition, to be a man or woman that God hath said shall have no other portion from him then in this world. If the Lord gives a man an estate, and doth not withal give him some proportionable measure of grace to know how to use it, and abound in it, that's a man that God saith, his portion shall be in this world; it is as much as if God should say from heaven concerning this man, Here's one, whose portion is in this world. In the 17th. Psalm, at the latter end, there the Psalmist speaks of men who have their portion in this world; here's their consolation, Thou hast a full estate, and doth God give thee nothing with thy full estate, it is like to be thy All. You will say, Is this so great a matter? I a thousand thousand times better thou hadst never been born, though thou hadst a thousand times more in the world then thou hast, if this should prove to be thy portion, thy All: for thou art made for eternity, and those creatures were not: and therefore if thou shouldst onely have hopes in this world, thou art a wretched creature. Shall St. Paul say, if we have onely hopes in this life, we were most miserable of all men: O may I say concerning thee, if thou hast onely hope in this life, thou art most miserable of all creatures, except the Devils themselves.

O it's a dreadfull thing for a man or woman to have their portion in this world: But now, those have it, that have a great deal in this world, and yet know not how to use it for God. O consider of this, you that God hath given more portion to than others; do you think thus in the night, Lord, thou hast indeed made my condition more comfortable then others, I am full handed, and have means coming in; but Lord, what if it should prove that my portion should be here. I remember it's reported of *Gregory*, that was the Pope, he did profess that there was no Scripture that did strike to his heart, so much as that Scripture; *Wo to you, here is your consolation*; fearing least his portion should be here. And the truth is, that Scripture, and that other in the 17th. Psalm, should go to the hearts of rich men, and of those that have a full estate in this world; except their consciences tell them, that through the grace of God, they have learned in some measure to know how to use it for the glory of God as for their own comfort. You account it an ill thing for a man to have an estate; and knows not how to use it for himself: As now, If a man should be born to a great inheritance, and should be a fool; you know his estate is begged: why now to have an estate and know not how to use it for God; is it not as great an evil? Is that onely an excellency to be able to know how to use an estate and improve it for your own advantage, and is it not as well to improve it for God? O it's a miserable condition that any man is in, that is full, and knows not how to be full; there's a man that is like to have his portion in this world.

If but that's not all neither, If God gives you an estate, and you know not how to be full; then all that thou  
hast

hath is cursed to thee : There is a secret curse of God goes along with it. As now ; when a man gives a thing in an anger , saith he , Here take it if you will and choke with it. Such kinde of speech men have when they give things in anger. But if you give to your Children things out of love , you do not onely give it them , but if there be any danger , you have a care that there be a right use of the things. So now , when God gives out to his own people , God hath a care of them after he hath given them ; I give it them , but I must have a care lest this turn to their hurt. But now , when God gives to a wicked man , Take them , saith God , if you will ; but God never minds them farther , to look after them , to see whether this shall do them good or no ; God never minds them , but lets them take them , and spoil themselves with them , God doth not care. Were it not a sign of hatred to a man , if I should see one that is a mad man ; and give him a Sword into his hand , I may be guilty of murther : It is as great an argument of hatred , that God doth hate a man , when he doth give him an estate , and yet doth not give him a heart to make use of that estate ; he puts ( as it were ) a Sword into a mad mans hand . But though I cannot do it justly , yet God may do it justly , as a punishment of sin. The curse of God is mixed with Wine as well as Water ; and then it's stronger in *Psal.* 69. 22, 23. There you may see how full comforts may be cursed unto men ; it is threatned as a punishment of their sin : *Let their table become a snare before them : and that which should have been for their welfare , let it become a trap.* O this is a terrible text , *Let their table become a snare :* It is a prophesie against those that gave Christ Gaul for his Meat , and Vinegar when he was upon the Crosse . And so it is against all  
such

such as shall insult over the people of God in their affliction. As men, when they are full and rich and prosperous in the world; they will add to the affliction of Gods people. Now this is the curse of God upon them, that shall add to the affliction of the people of God; *Let their table become a snare before them, and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap.* Thou hast a Table well furnished, but how do'st thou know but that it is a snare for thee, and a trap? We set traps to catch Vermin withal, and if thou hast a wicked heart, God looks upon thee but as a Vermin, and doth set this to be a trap to catch thee withal: Now perhaps thou do'st not see it: Why mark the word that follows, *Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not.* The Curse lies secret, that thou canst not see; now this is part of the Curse. How few men do see a Curse upon their Tables. No, this (Isay) is part of the Curse of God upon them that they should not. O what need is there that we that have any fulness of the Creature, learn to be full; least that which should have been for our welfare, is turned into a Curse unto us.

Well, But though it be cursed, yet if he may enjoy it still, a wicked man will be content.

Then that's the next thing in the evil of that mans condition, that hath not learned to be full; That God justly may rend away what thou hast in his wrath from thee: And because thou knowest not how to use it, it were just with God in his wrath to rend it from thee. As you will do, if you have servants, or any in the house, if they have a knife in their hand, and you see that they are ready to do mischief with it, you will snatch it from them; Nay, if you know not how to use it, you shall have it no longer. It is just with God to come upon thee in his  
G wrath,



wrath, and to take away all thy outward comforts, because thou do'st not know how to use them. Thou knowest not how to make use of a Child for God, or of an Estate for God; and so he may justly take it from thee, thou not knowing how to use it. So God doth threaten in *Psalm* 78. 25, 31. *Man* (saith he) *did eat Angels food, he sent them meat to the full; but in ver. 29. So they did eat, and were well filled; for he gave them their own desires.* But then it follows, *They were not estranged from their lusts, but while the meat was yet in their mouths, the wrath of God came upon them.* They eat to the full, and had enough, I, but they onely sought out of greediness to satisfie themselves; and the wrath of God came upon them, while the meat was in their mouths. It provokes the wrath of God upon men, when they have a fulness, and yet have not learned to be full.

And as God may justly rend it all away from them, so when they come to an affliction, O how sad will it be to those men that have not learned to be full; O then there will be matter for Conscience to gnaw upon and terrifie the Soul withal. Afflictions will be dreadful to those men that have had a full Estate and not learned to be full: Then Conscience will upbraid them, and say, O you once had plenty, you once had the comforts of the Creature to the full; O but how did you use them, what glory had God by them? Were they not made fuel for your lusts, and serviceable to your wickedness? And now it is a righteous thing with God to take these things from thee; and these sorrows that are now upon thee, are but the beginning of sorrows. O the conscience of a man that hath been rich, and afterwards is crossed in his Estate, if while he was rich, he was not godly; this mans conscience will tear him and rend him. Though now you enjoy

enjoy fulness, yet you may not expect to enjoy it all-ways. What do you think will become of you, when your fulness shall be taken from you? O then it will be terrible to you.

Yea and further, If a man be in a full condition, and learns not to be full; such a man will do abundance of hurt in the place where he lives; not onely to himself but to others. O the evil he may do in a Town and in a Family, and in a Kingdom. One rich man, if God doth not sanctifie his heart and his estate, may do more mischief than an hundred other wicked men. God doth not so much look at the hurt that base Drunkards, that go up and down, from one Alehouse to another can do. They may destroy their own souls, but now a man that is a man of an estate in the place where God hath set him, if he spend nights in Chambering and Wantonness; if he contemn the wayes of God and Religion; O the hurt that comes by that man, and the guiltiness that will come upon his Spirit that way. O how is the Gospel hindered by such men as they, that have outward prosperous estates; and yet for all that have not hearts to make use of it: whereas I shall shew presently the contrary will be in those that have learned to be full. But onely now, to shew the danger of a full condition, If we have not learned to be full; and all to put you upon this, that you may beseech God to learn you to be full, when God doth give you a fulness; least you should contract the guilt of the sins of thousands of others upon you.

And then, If thou do'st not learn to be full, thy full estate will endanger thy salvation exceedingly. *It is easier for a Cammel (saith Christ) to go thorow the eye of a Needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* Now Christ doth not interpret at first what is a

rich man, but at another time he doth, *those that trust in them.* Chrysostom hath this passage, upon that to the Hebrews, He wonders how any Governor can come to be saved. The fulness of a mans condition doth much endanger his salvation, if God doth not teach him how to be full.

And then it will make death to be more terrible. O Death, how terrible will it be to a man that hath not learned to be full. When Death shall come, and now he must be deprived of all, bid an everlasting farewell to his House and Estate, and Lands comming in. Never such merry meetings as he was wont to have, I but now they are gone; there's an end of those dayes, he shall never have them more. O then (I say) Death will gnaw upon a man, and then a mans conscience indeed will terrifie him. If he be afflicted, they will come upon him to terrifie him. But when he sees that he must bid an everlasting farewell to all those things, then Death will terrifie him to purpose. O conscience will tell him, Now art thou going to give an account before the great God of all that thou didst enjoy in this world. It's a sad message that this will be to some that are full. You think because you have money to pay for what you eat and drink, and do enjoy, you think you shall be called to no farther account. O yes, you must be called to an account for all the Creatures that you do enjoy. Now if men can scarce count the mercies that they do enjoy, O then how will you be able to give an account for them. Well, all this is but to awaken the hearts of people that have the comforts of this world, that they may not satisfie themselves with what they enjoy; but seek what they can to learn to be full.

And

And the Excellency of this Lesson of Learning to be full, is very great.

For first, It shews a great deal of ingenuity in the heart of a man. Ingenuity in these two regards,

First, Because hereby it appears that this man is not onely for his own turn.

It's a fardid spirit for a man to seek to serve his own turn upon others, and when his turn is served, never to care for any body.

But now, an ingenious spirit, when that hath its own turn serv'd, it is as careful again to return answerable respect to those

that were useful to him, as it was desirous to have its own turn serv'd before.

So it is in those that have learned to be full, they have ingenuity; they are as careful to return answerable respects to God, as they are to receive any mercy from him.

And their Ingenuity is in this, That they are thankful spirits.

An ingenious heart is a thankful heart, and loves to acknowledge whence he had any mercy.

And then further, That's great ingenuity for one to be moved by good, and be moved by mercy.

'Tis a slavish spirit that's onely mov'd by necessity and force and violence.

That's nothing for a man to be forced to do a duty. The basest Slave by a Whip will be put to do that that is his duty, I, but for one to be wrought upon by love and by goodness, this is ingenuity.

Now if the Lord hath given thee an estate, and thou findest it doth draw thy heart to God more, and works upon thy heart,

that thou art affected by Gods mercy; O this is a sign of an ingenious heart.

And then, what grace such a man hath, is a great deal more conspicuous than others mens graces, and more beautiful.

As a Diamond, that is set in Gold, there is a beauty in it. A Diamond set in a Crown of Gold,

doth

doth sparkle more gloriously, than when it is wrapt up in a dirty Rag. So the graces of many that are poor and mean in the world, are (as it were) wrapt up in a dirty rag; as sometimes they wrap up their money. But now a man that is eminent in the world, and godly too, his graces are like Diamonds upon a Crown (as it were) that are so conspicuous before the world, that the world takes much notice of them, and gives glory to God for them.

Thirdly, It's an excellency, because it is so rare. It's a very rare thing for a man to be instructed in this Lesson of being full. It's a speech of Bernard, *Not to be lifted up, when a man is put high, that is very unusual; now, saith he, the more unusual it is, the more glorious thing it is.* It is a very rare blessing of God upon a man; for him to learn to be full. I remember the same learned man Bernard, writing to Eugenius, that was advanced to great favour; he speaks of the grace of God towards him, and blessing God for it; his promotion did not succeed his former estate, but was added to his former estate. That's thus, The promotion of many men doth succeed their former estate; that is, the former ingenuity they had, and ingenuity that they seem'd to have; that's gone, and the promotion doth come and succeed it. But the promotion of this Eugenius was not so; he continued in the former estate that he was in before; that is, the former humility and heavenly-mindedness, and holiness as he seem'd to have before, so he had the same still: so that his state and promotion did not succeed, but was added to it. I, this is an excellency indeed, when a mans fullness is added to his former condition, and doth not succeed it; that is, he is the same man now that he was before: that's a rare blessing of God upon one.

Fourthly,



Fourthly, It argues a great deal of strength of grace, for a man that is full, and knows how to be full, and to improve it. It argues not only grace, but strength of grace: as it argues a great deal of strength in mens bodies, that they can drink a great deal of Wine, and not be drunk. Some think that they may take liberty to themselves to drink Wine, so they do not stagger in the streets. But you know the Scripture saith, *Woe to those that are strong to drink Wine.* It's a speech of *Sereca*, *That moderation is a sign of a strong breast.* Moderation in the midst of prosperity, is a sign of a strong heart. It's a sign God hath given thee strength of grace, if thy conscience can witness this to thee. Well, Through Gods mercy, though I have many weaknesses, and fail in all that I do, yet I can say, to the praise of God, that my estate hath not estranged my heart from God; but my heart doth cleave to God, and I have communion with God in the Creature, that God sends me. And when God doth give me the best Voyages, I find my heart in the best temper, and I have more sweet communion with God then than at other times. Can you say so? I appeal to your consciences now, whether you can say, as in the presence of God, I never found my heart in a more heavenly spiritual temper, than when I have found God blessing me in my labors; and I have enjoyed God in them. O now, if thou canst say so, be of good comfort; thou hast learned a lesson that is a thousand times worth more than all thy prosperity. This is thine excellency, not that thou hast a fuller estate than others, but that God hath taught thee such a lesson as this is.

And then farther, Such a one may do abundance of good. What abundance of glory may God have from one man that way; whereas a man that is of an estate, and

and hath not grace withal, he is like a great Elder Tree in the midst of a Garden. Such a Tree, why it spoils the Flowers and doth hurt there. I but one that hath an estate and is rich, and godly withal, he stands as a prime Flower in the Garden, that is an ornament to it: As commonly, in the midst of your knots you set a prime flower there, to be an ornament to all the rest. So the Lord will have some to be rich, that may be an ornament and a shelter to his servants. O many, many hundreds of people, will bless God, that ever God set such a man in such a place; and that God did give them their estate. We say of some men that they have good estates, I, and it's well bestowed on them; for they do a great deal of good with them. But now, when they are not only so, but their hearts are to improve their estates for the furtherance of the Gospel, for the beating down of sin, and the countenancing of Religion, O then all the people of God that live about them, will bless God, O for such a man. Had it not been for some few in a place that God gave estates unto, that was stirring, what would have become of the Gospel; Religion would have been trampled under feet. O will not this be a greater comfort in the day of Jesus Christ, when Christ shall own this, and say, *I gave you an estate in the world, and I acknowledge that you did make use of it for my Glory and Religion. I made you an instrument to uphold it in the place where you were used.* O if Christ should own this, would it not be a thousand times worth your estates.

And then, When you come to die, O how sweetly will you die; when you can say, *O Lord remember me for good.* As *Nehemiah* did in the close of his Book, look upon the very last words of *Nehemiah*; he was a

man

man that was full in outward blessings, and he improv'd them to purpose for God; and that was the very close of all; *Lord remember me for good*; and so may'st thou when thou comest to die. Thy conscience shall not upbraid thee, as others will; Thou comest to God for mercy, What come to me for mercy? I have bestowed mercy upon you already, and how did you abuse it? With what face can you cry to me for mercy, that have abus'd it so? O but when your Consciences can tell you that you have not abused Gods mercy, but his mercy in outward things hath drawn your hearts unto him, and you have imploied it in his service: Now thou may'st with joy and encouragement say, *Lord remember me for good*. And if God should ever bring thee into afflictions in this world, it will be sweet and comfortable to thee, if thou hast used thy prosperity well. For that man that is willing to give up the comfort of his prosperity to God, which he doth enjoy; God will have a care to take away the gaul and the bitterness of affliction from that man when he is under affliction. O there's nothing more comfortable to a man in affliction, than to consider that he hath made use of his prosperity for the honour & glory of God. When I was in prosperity, God had honour; and now I am in affliction, I can comfortably fly to God for peace and comfort to my soul.

And in this; God doth attain to his end and the end of his Creatures. God hath his end especially from these men; the end of his Works of Creation and Providence. Why; the Lord hath made this world and filled it with abundance of excellent things; but now, how shall God attain his end: that is, To have glory from the excellent things that he hath made in the world? Why, most men takes them and abuses them to Gods dishonour; now were there not some men that had hearts to give God the glory

glory of their estates, why God should have no glory from all his works; all his works would be as it were to no purpose. But now it seems God hath called thee out to give him the glory of his works; so that thou art the man among so many that doth pay as it were to God the rent that he requires for all the great things that he hath done in the world; which cannot but bring in a great deal of comfort to thee, and shews the excellency of it.

I have now but two other things for the opening of it before we come to the application, yet all the way as we have gone along, we have endeavour'd to apply it; shewing wherein it consists, the difficulty of it, and the excellency of it: Now for the close at this time, let these things sink into your hearts; I'll give you one Scripture that you may go a way and seek to God to teach you how to be full, and to learn this lesson; It is in the 12 ver. of the Epistle of Jude, *These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear.* There is the description of wicked and ungodly men. How are they described? They feast themselves without fear, that they may be fed to the full; they care for nothing else. O this is a sign of a wretched wicked man, to feast himself without fear. Hath God given thee a full estate, and what; dost thou take it without fear. If God hath given thee an estate, and all outward comforts in this world according to thy hearts desire, it stands thee upon to fear least thou shouldst not improve it for God. And O that God would send you away from his presence upon the consideration of what you have heard, even with trembling hearts. Lord, Thou hast given us these and these outward comforts; (and let Husband speak thus to the Wife, and Wife to the Husband, when they see all things coming in in a plentiful way:)

way :) O the Lord hath given us these mercies more than others, O but how if we should not improve them for God, how if we should abuse them, and if we have not answerable grace to make use of them, what should become of us? Now having your hearts possess'd with the fear of this, you will be the more like to be driven to God in prayer; to seek of him that he would learn you this lesson, to teach you how to be full.

And there is a great mystery in this, as there is a mystery of Godliness in Contentment, so there is a mystery in this; and I shall shew you further that it is done in a kind of mystical way. There are indeed some natural Rules, whereby we may propound to men how to make use of their prosperity; and it were well if all of us were wrought upon in a natural way. But I shall endeavor to go further with you than so, To shew you in a spiritual way how you should learn to be full, according to the Rules of the Gospel; To manifest the mystery of Godliness in the giving God the glory of your Estates and all the Comforts that you do enjoy in this world.

## S E R M O N I I I

**W**E shall now come to what remains, There are but three things more in this point that now we are to finish.

And the First is, To shew you what a mystery of Godliness there is in a right learning how to be full.

Secondly, What are the several Lessons that are to be learned.

H 2

And



And then the application of all from the point.

And this is the method we observed in the learning how to want. The Mystery of Godliness.

And I told you that from the word in my Text, *I am instructed*, so it is in your Books; but in the Original it is, *I am taught as in a mystery*; so that there is a mystery in both these. I have shewn you in many things wherein the mystery of Godliness lies in learning how to be content. A godly man knows how to abound after another manner than any other can do. Perhaps a man by some strength of natural prudence and wisdom may know how to order his Estate, so as not to be very inordinate and wicked in the management of his outward estate. A man that hath civility and natural wisdom, may make some good use of the blessings of God, that God hath given him: But a gracious heart comes to sanctifie the name of God in his estate and outward blessings that God hath given him, in another manner than natural wisdom will teach a man. Grace will raise a mans spirit higher, and that in these particulars,

First, A gracious heart learns how to be full, by often resigning up the estate that it doth possess unto God. He learns how to enjoy his estate, by resigning up all his estate and comforts unto God. This is a way that a natural man understands little of. To know how to enjoy his comforts by resigning up his comforts; yet that's the way of a gracious heart. He doth very frequently, when he gets alone into his Closet, resign up his Estate. *Lord, Thou hast blessed me with many outward comforts, more than thou hast done others of my brethren. Lord, I here profess all to be thine, and give up all to thee; all belongs to thee, and I desire to enjoy up further than I may be useful to thee, in the place where thou hast put me. Hine Lord, I give*

*I give up my self and all my fulness unto thee, take all, dispose all, lay out all for thine own praise and glory.* And by this means, when he hath done this, he comes to enjoy more sweetness than what he hath in any other way. It is not in a greedy use of what he hath, that he comes to enjoy his fulness; but by resigning up what he hath to God: and so he comes to enjoy his fulness in a better manner and more comfortably than ever he did before. This a godly heart finds by experience (as divers times upon occasion I have hinted to you) that the oftner any thing comes out of Gods hand, the better and sweeter it is; and therefore he is willing to give up often what he hath into the hand of God: And that's the first way. But,

Secondly, He learns how to be full in this way of mystery; he doth seek to preserve his comforts and enrich himself; by communicating what he hath: not onely by resigning to God, but by communicating his comforts he seeks to preserve them; and he seeks to enrich himself by communicating of his riches. Now this is a mysterious way, yet the Scriptures shews this to be the way of a gracious heart. A carnal heart he would enjoy his fulness, but how; that is, by keeping it to himself: I but a godly heart that learns in the way of mystery how to be full; looks upon it as the onely way to preserve his estate, by communicating his estate, by doing many good works, by making use of his estate for the publick good, the glory of God and the good of his brethren. In *Isa. 32*: you have a notable Scripture for that, that that's the way that a godly man uses for the preserving of his estate; *ver. 8. But the liberal deviseth liberal things.* What then, he doth not onely take the opportunity when he is called to communicate of his estate, but studies with him-  
self

self how he may communicate his estate for good. I but he may quickly communicate all away, you will say, and grow a begger himself. No, but mark what the Text saith, *And by liberal things shall he stand*: That's the way that he takes for the preservation of what he hath: he will trust God with that. And indeed he comes to enjoy the comfort of his life by the communicating of the comforts of his life. And then he seeks to get riches by communicating of his riches. That Scripture you have for this in 1 Tim. 6. 17. *Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God; who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. That they do good, that they be rich in good works; ready to distribute.* The more good works he doth, the richer he makes account himself is. Now, ordinarily a carnal heart, when he is call'd to do good works, he cannot for shame but do something; I but he thinks he is the poorer by it. What will you get away all my estate and make me a begger? Why, these often Contributions draws away my estate, and they think they have so much of their heart-blood drawn away, and so they grow poorer and poorer. But a godly man he makes account that the more good works he doth, the richer man he grows. Why God himself accounts his riches to be in the works of mercy. In Eph. 2. there you shall find that the riches of God are in the works of his mercy. *That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us.* Why God is not said to be rich in power so much as in grace; in the works of his mercy, in the works of kindness. And so a godly man, that hath learned by the grace of God to be full, doth account himself made rich in the communicating what fulness God hath given him, for the glory of his

his Name and the good of others. This is a second mysterious way of a godly mans learning how to be full.

And then the Third way of a Godly mans learning how to be full is this; He doth learn how to have comfort in his estate, by mortifying of his affections to his estate; and by moderating of his spirit in the joy that he hath in his estate, he comes to receive the greater joy in what he hath given to him. This you will say is a riddle, for a man to have greater joy in outward things, by moderating of his joy, and to have a greater fulness in his abundance, by keeping himself within bounds. This is the way of a godly man, the more he keeps himself within bounds, the more comfort he hath in his abundance; and the more he can mortifie his affections to the comforts of the world, the more comfort hath he in these comforts of the world. Now because this may seem to be a great riddle and mystery (for so it is) I will give you one Scripture that will make it out fully; and it is in *Phil. 4. 4, 5. Rejoyce in the Lord alway, and again I say rejoyce.* Here the Apostle puts people to rejoyce, to rejoyce in the Lord; that is, not onely in spiritual things, but rejoyce in all Gods blessings in a spiritual way. Now the men of the world, when they are put upon it to rejoyce, and again to rejoyce, they think they know not how to rejoyce but by letting out their hearts without any bounds; they know not how to keep any bounds. But mark the words that follow, *Let your moderation be known unto all men.* As if the Apostle should say, And would you rejoyce indeed truly and graciously and fully, I exhort you to rejoyce, and again to rejoyce. Well then, This is pleasing to the heart of a man, we will give our selves liberty to rejoyce, we will enlarge our selves  
in

in our joy. I but, saith the Apostle, *Let your moderation be known to all men* though : So that in that he adds this exhortation, *Let your moderation be known to all men*, it's apparent that he means the joy in outward things as well as in spiritual things : *Let your moderation be known to all*, so that he doth not envy your rejoicing in your estate. You may rejoyce in the comforts of this world that God hath given you. But would you have true joy, that that should glad your hearts indeed, let your moderation be known to all men, and do so bound your selves in your joy, and let your hearts be so mortified to the world, as that you may rejoyce in God, even while you rejoyce in the outward blessings that God hath given to you. And although many men may think this to be a mystery, and scarce to be believed ; yet those who are truly godly, find this by experience. I appeal to you, when have you had the greatest comfort and joy in your estates and comings in, but at that time when you have found your hearts mortified to the world, and that you could keep your selves in bounds. If a man goes abroad, and among company, if he can keep his appetite in bounds and eat moderately, he hath more comfort in his meat and drink than another man hath that eats excessively. A man that eats and drinks moderately, he preserves his health, and by preserving his health he hath more sweetness in his meat and drink in a constant way, than those that eat and drink immoderately ; and when a man hath been abroad among company, and let out his heart profusely in way of laughter and merriment, and all upon the merry pin ; why in the midst of this laughter his heart is even sad, and when he comes home, he comes home with a dead spirit. He is like *Nabal*, you know that when he  
was



was feasting, his heart was merry ; but as soon as his drunkenness was gone from him , his heart died like a stone. Many Company-keepers that give liberty to themselves in jollity and mirth , why the next day their hearts are even as dead as a stone ; and there's a great deal of guilt upon their spirits , and their consciences fly in their faces ; so that they have not so much joy in their spirits as those that can keep within bounds. Those that can go in a sober way and meet with their neighbours , and rejoyce one with another ; they when they come home , can bless God for this their refreshing that they have had ; and the next morning their hearts are in a sweet and joyful frame. The more we keep our selves in bounds in the use of the Creature , the more comfort have we in the use of the Creature. That's the third way of a gracious hearts learning how to abound. He learns how to enjoy the world, by mortifying his heart to it , and by keeping himself within bounds in the use of the Creature.

And then the Fourth way of mystery of the Godlies learning how to abound , it is this ; He learns how to abound , by getting all that he hath to be sanctified by the Word and Prayer. It was one way of knowing how to want , by having our afflictions sanctified to us ; and so it is the way to know how to abound. Now this is a way that carnal hearts have little skill in , they think they know how to abound by their natural wisdom ; I but the way that a gracious heart hath for abounding , is this ; *God hath prospered me in my way and course in any kind ; now let me go to God and exercise Faith in his Word , and seek unto him in prayer , that I may have a sanctified use of all these things then that God hath granted to me.* In 1 Tim. 4. 4, 5. Every Creature of God is good , and nothing to be refused , if it be received with  
I thank-

thanksgiving; *for it is sanctified by the Word of God and Prayer.* A little to open this Scripture, That the Creature is sanctified by prayer, that I suppose is easie for you to understand; that is, when I have any good in any Creature, then I am to seek to God by prayer for a sanctified use of it unto me. But how is it sanctified by the Word? Now that that the Apostle doth intend here in sanctifying by the Word, is this, that he would shew to us, That a godly man hath another kind of interest in the Creature than another man hath; saith he, All things are good, but how shall they be good to me? How shall I know that they are good to me? That must be by the Word (saith he) I cannot know that they are good to me, that I have a sanctified use of them, that is, that all the comforts I have, I do enjoy them in order to eternal life; for then a thing is sanctified, when it is consecrated (as it were) and made holy: that is, when it is made useful to the highest and last end. As a place is sanctified, when it is separated from other things for God; so when the blessing of God is upon my estate, to make it to be to his glory and my last good, then it is sanctified. Now how comes this? This is by the Word of God; for we by our fall have lost all our interest in the creature unto our outward comfort. Now God indeed out of his bounty doth give to some men abundance here in this world, I he gives them those things that are in themselves good; I but how shall they come to be good to him; that must be by the Word saith he, that is, God by the Word of his Gospel, the Covenant that he hath made with his poor servants in Christ revealed in his Word; it is that that gives the godly man a sanctified use of what he hath. If he hath it in a natural way, it may prove a curse to him; if he hath it only by Gods  
general

general providence, by the command of God in his works of providence, that is no sanctified use. But now, if a man comes to enjoy what he hath by the word of the promise, by the word of the Gospel, that reveals Christ unto us, and our renewed interest unto all we do enjoy by Jesus Christ. This is the *Word* that sanctifies all to us. Most men look upon what they enjoy, onely but in a way of general providence. Now a gracious heart looks upon what he enjoys by the word of the Promise, the word of the Covenant, that gives him a sanctified use; and through the power of this word, he comes to know how to be full: and use all his abundance in a right way: so that the way he takes for the making use of his fulness, it is, when God blesses him, presently to exercise faith in the Word, in the Promise; to look into the Covenant. Godliness hath the promise of the things of this life, and of that which is to come. And so he comes to make use of the promise, and improve it by faith; and so comes to have a sanctified use and improvement of all the good things that he doth enjoy in this world. Is not this a mystery to most rich men. Doth it put them upon prayer more than before, and upon the exercise of Faith in the Word more than before. One that is godly, never prays more than when God doth prosper him in this world. It is usual for men to pray much in times of affliction. *In their affliction they will seek me early.* I but that's a sign of a carnal heart. But now, a godly man, when God prospers him, he sees cause to pray most then. I it is for poor people to live by faith, that have nothing in the world. You will think it's fit for them to believe and trust in God. I but a godly man, uses the more faith, when he hath the most in the world. That's a good way in the mystery of knowing how to be full.

And then a Fifth way in the mystery of knowing how to be full, is this. A godly heart by his fulness grows to increase his humility, grows sensible of his unworthiness by his fulness. Now this is a way of mystery too, It is a good thing for a man to have humility together with his fulness, but to have humility by his fulness, this is a very great mystery; it's a rare thing to see humble prosperity; but to see a man humble by his prosperity, this is rare indeed. Affliction will humble men, that's true, every one can understand that; but how prosperity should humble men, that's very hard to understand. I'll give you a clear Scripture for this, how prosperity will humble a gracious heart; it's in the 2 Sam. 7. 18. The Lord there had told David of great things that he would do for him, and spake to him of the honour that he had put upon him, and that he would still put upon him, and he would continue his House to be a great House, and honourable, like the great men of the earth. Mark, one would have thought that the heart of David should have been raised up, when God told him not only the great things that he had done, but the great things he would do. This would have pufft up a carnal heart. But then mark, in the 18 verse, *Then went King David in, and sat before the Lord, and he said who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto; and this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servants house for a great while to come; and is this the manner of men, O Lord God; and what can David say more unto thee; for thou Lord God knowest thy servant for thy words sake; and according to thine own heart hast thou done all these great things, to make thy servants know them: wherefore thou art great O Lord God.* He doth not bless himself,

self, O God hath made me great; but, wherefore *thou* art great; and *what am I*, and *what is my house*, and it is according to *thine own heart*; and not according to any thing in me, saith *David*. The larger God was in telling of him the great things he had, and should have, the more humble was the heart of *David*. O this is a good sign of true humility, when you find your comings in to be more then heretofore, as if you have had a great voyage, many hundreds coming in of clear gain: then for you to get alone, as it's said that *David* did go then and sat down before the Lord. Go and set thy selfe before the Lord, and fall humbling thy soul; O Lord, *who am I that thou should'st deal thus graciously with me, that thou should'st make such a difference between me and others*. When your tents come in it may be quarterly more then others; why think with your selves, Lord, *What is it that hath made the difference between me and others? Others have their 18 pence a day for the providing for their families, and thou givest me hundreds together*. O Lord, *what am I, that it should be thus with me more than with others!* O if it were thus, it were right indeed; and yet this is the way of a godly mans learning how to be full. His fulness teaches him humility, and by being taught humility by his fulness, he comes to know how to be full for the glory of God and the good of his Church.

Sixthly, Anohter mystery there is in a godly mans learning how to be full, is, He accounts it better to lose for, and return to God; than to gain for, and keep to himself. A godly heart when he hath a fulness, he doth rejoyce in it according as God will have him, in the outward blessings that he hath; I but he rejoyceth more in this, that he hath something to venture and lose for God, than that he hath gain for himself. One man rejoyces



joyces that he hath an estate to live merrily withal, and bravely in the world; the other man rejoyces that he hath an estate that he may venture for God; and his returning any thing to God, he doth account a greater priviledge to him than receiving from God. This is a way of mystery too; and of this there was something spoken likewise in the way of Contentment; and therefore I shall but name it now.

Seventhly, and then the last way is this, A godly man learns to abound, by abounding in holiness: The more he abounds in worldly riches, the more he seeks to abound in holiness and in the duties of Gods Worship. Now this is a mystery to the men of the world, they think indeed, poor men that have not so much to do in the world, they may be often in the Worship of God, and hear Sermons, and meditate (and the like.) But for them that have so many things to take them off, they think it cannot be expected from them. Whereas godliness will teach men to abound in their many businesses and outward prosperity that they have, and the great things of the world, by adding a proportionable abounding in the performance both of the Worship of God and in holiness. They think that because they have so many things to draw them aside, that they cannot be so holy as others: but now, godliness will teach them to be more holy, according to the proportion of their estate: As eminent above others, so they will labour that their holiness shall be eminent above others. O this were an excellent thing indeed, if all rich men should never satisfie themselves in this barely, that they have more than others, but look to what a degree God hath made them higher then others in their estates; that they should endeavour and never be satisfied till they attain to it, till

till they be in the like degree above others in holiness. Why now for men to do this, is a mysterious thing, and where this is, certainly those are well instructed in the mystery of godliness. Thus you see that a gracious heart learns how to abound, not in a meer natural way, by natural wisdom, but in a way of mystery of godliness.

But then there are divers Lessons that he learns by learning this Lesson: As I told you in knowing how to be content, one need learn a great many Lessons before he get to be instructed in the Art of Contentment in Affliction; so in abounding in the same manner: As now,

First, (I'll but name these things) He must learn the Lesson of the Principle from whence all he hath comes, the fountain from whence all his good comes; be thoroughly instructed in that. Why I do enjoy these and these outward comforts; from whence have I these? Why God hath blessed my endeavors and skill, that God hath given me more than others. I but it is the blessing of God in all beyond my skill. Such and such friends have left me so much means; I but the fountain is on high, from whence all the outward good that I have comes. This in general is acknowledged, but the learning of it indeed in a gracious manner will work mightily upon the heart; the understanding of the fountain of all my outward good as well as spiritual good.

Yea, And this Fountain, it is not onely God the First Being, the Creator of all, in his providence, but it is God in Christ: For we are to know that the very preservation of the world is through the mediation of Jesus Christ; the world would fall about our ears else: and all the good things in the creature are preserved by the power of Christ now. And so a gracious heart looks  
upon

upon the fountain of all, not onely as God the Creator of all; but God through Christ the Mediator, that doth preserve the world: the world would otherwise fall into confusion. And so all the good that I have, it comes from the work of Gods wisdom and goodness, ordering things through Christ unto me.

And then, the lesson of our unworthiness, that's to be learned throughly; your unworthiness of the least crum of bread, the least drop of water for the cooling of you. This would teach you how to be content in want, (that we spake to before) and it will likewise teach you how to abound, when you can learn your own baseness and vileness before the Lord. And I now speak it, not to learn it by your prosperity, that was before in the mystery of it, but to learn it any way; by considering your sinfulness, and your inability to use what you have; and considering how little service you have done for God: learn to know your selves, that was the lesson in learning to want, to know our selves; but above all men, rich men had need to learn to know themselves.

And then, To learn the vanity of the Creature and the uncertainty of it; that helps you how to want, and so it will help you to abound too. It's true, I have these things, but what are these things to the portion of an Immortal Soul; is there not a vanity in all these things in the world? They make no such great difference between me and others, but they are such things as often I have heard may stand with the hatred of God, such things as a Reprobate may have for his portion: That meditation will make men willing to be content in the want of them. I abound now in these things, why what great reason is there that I should have

have my heart lifted up thereby, here's many now in the world that are lower then I, and there are abundance in Hell that had more than I. O this will be a meanes to moderate thy heart, and help thee to know how to abound, when thou considerest of the vanity of the things of the world, and of the uncertainty of them; I have them now, how quickly may they be gone; my house bravely furnisht, how quickly may God send a Fire. O consider the uncertainty of all you have, and this will teach you how to make use of what you have in a loose way: *Charge men that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches.* Or if God should not take away your riches, why let God but turn some humour in your bodies, and bring some pain or disease; and what will all your riches do you good? Let God but touch me in my brain, I shall not know how to make use of my estate; or touch me in my body, a little in the kidnies, or pain in the bowels; what's all the world then. O consider of the vanity and of the uncertainty of all things; the learning of that lesson is a great help in knowing how to abound.

And then, The learning that all these things are but Talents, God gives me them to trade withal, and I am but a Steward (put them together) I am but Gods Steward, and God puts me to trade for him in all that I do: This will teach men how to abound. When you imploy Factors, if they be faithful, the very consideration of this, This is my Masters goods; and I am but a Steward, and I am to give account, and must keep my books even: The consideration of this will call off his thoughts from other things, and make him look to his books to keep them even. O if you would

but learn this lesson, that all outward comforts are Talents that are given you to husband for God, and you are his Stewards; it would make you to keep the books even: Every day you would be casting over the books: Are things even between God and me? What doth God aim at, why I should have a prosperous estate and others not? By searching to know Gods end, a mans conscience will presently tell him, Surely God did not aim at this, that I should have more satisfaction to my flesh; there is some thing else that God did aim at: Let me learn to know Gods end.

And then, Learn this lesson, and it would be a great help to you for the learning how to abound: That is, That God doth but very seldom trust his own people with these Outward Comforts (that we have spoken to in the opening of it) but now I bring it in as a lesson that is to be learned, and shew you how that will help you how to abound: I spoke of it by way of evidence that it is a difficult thing for us to learn how to abound. Now this lesson will put us upon this, To learn to be so much the more watchful over our selves.

And then, Let not me blefs my self in my abundance.

And then, Let me desire proportionable measure of grace to what I have, least what I have turn to my hurt rather than for my good. Such and many other lessons might be named for the helping of us to abound; but the truth is, there's nothing almost will help us to know how to want, but it will likewise help us to abound; and therefore I do but name these things.

We come now as briefly as we can to wind up all in a word of Application. You have had these six particulars opened



opened to you, When a man knows how to abound;  
And the difficulty of it; And the necessity of it; And  
the excellency of it; And the mystery of it; And the  
lessons to be learned.

Now then my Brethren, from all that hath been *Appl.*  
said, it serves to rebuke those men who take care  
onely how they may get fulness in the world; and  
never are satisfied there: but to know how they may  
use this for God, and how to manage their fulness,  
it's scarce in all their thoughts. I appeal to you this  
morning, as in the Name of God, Have these things  
been in your thoughts that have been spoken to you?  
I dare not lay it so, that every particular should be  
in your thoughts; but in the general hath it been in  
your thoughts and care, as much to know how you  
should abound, as to get your abundance. God knows  
it is otherwise, and your consciences may tell you, that  
that's your care how you may improve and get abun-  
dance; but how to abound, that hath been but little  
known: But by what hath been said out of the Scrip-  
ture the Lord hath rebuked you for one that hath a  
carnal heart, a sensual and an earthly heart; for one  
that's little acquainted with the wayes of God, and spi-  
ritual things: O that thou would'st charge thy own  
soul in thy retired thoughts and meditations; and that  
God would make what hath been said out of this to  
stick upon thy heart.

And then, Secondly, Hence we are taught what an  
excellent thing Religion is, that it helps every way. It  
helps us how to want, it helps us how to abound. If  
we be in a low estate, there comes in a help; if we be  
in a high estate, there comes in a help. O Religion is

of admirable use, Grace and Godliness is of other manner of use then the world thinks for. And as it is of use to all, so it is above all to rich men. O that rich men would believe this, That they have the greatest need of Grace. O that rich men by this would learn to be in love with Godliness, and with those means that might work Grace upon them; because there's nothing can do them so much good as Religion. O if Grace be answerable to their Estates, then they are happy men indeed. If the Lord please to add his upper Spring to the neather Springs, then they are happy Creatures. God gives you abundance in the neather Springs, but doth he give you the upper Springs too? O have thy thoughts working thus, *The Lord hath given me enough for this world, to carry me thorow this Pilgrimage of mine; O but had I grace added to all that I have, then I should be a happy man indeed.* O learn to know the excellency of Grace, and what need you have of it above other men.

Thirdly, Hence upon what we hear, me thinks all our desires should be moderated in respect of this world; and you poor people, you should not be so much troubled for want of abundance: for you see there's a great deal of difficulty in learning how to abound: And when our spirits are set upon the things of this world, let us curb them in this; *I see there's a great deal of difficulty in knowing, how to use things, and therefore let me be more moderate in my desires after abundance.* And,

Fourthly, You that have rich friends any of you, you see what need you have here to pray for them. It was the speech of a holy man once, when he met an acquaintance of his, that he had not seen a long time before, and it seems he had a great estate befallen him; as soon as he met

met him, O Sir (saith he) *I had never need to pray for you so much as now.* His friend stood amazed at it, supposing that he had heard of some great evil that had befallen him. He gives him this answer, *I hear you have a great estate befallen to you.* Certainly there's no men in the world, that have so much need of Prayer, as those that are high in estate.

And then, You who do abound, be you exhorted to what you have heard, and now to set upon the work, *To learn how to abound.*

Learn this one Lesson farther (that should have been spoken) *Learn thoroughly your dependance upon God in all your abundance; To see as much need of God in the midst of your abundance, as in the greatest depth of affliction.* That's one thing that is of very great use. A man hath attain'd to a good measure of Grace when he comes to this, that he sees he hath as much need of mercy from God in his abundance, as in the lowest afflicted estate in the world. Many men and women they think that they have need of God in their affliction; then they depend upon God. I but you should depend upon God as much if you had all the world to possess, as the poorest beggar in the world. This you may either put into the mystery that there is in it, or into the Lessons; for indeed it is a mystery to the men of the world: and therefore Christ teaches not onely poor people to come and say, *Lord give us this day our daily bread;* but the richest men in the world is to pray for the greatest Prince and Monarch in the World is every day to come to God, to the Gates of Mercy, to beg his bread. Now if rich men would be so sensible of their condition, that, they depend upon God for the enjoyment of what they have every moment; have as much need of mercy as the poorest wretch that

that lives upon the Face of the Earth : This would be a mighty help for them to learn how to Abound. I beseech you, examine whether this be so in you or no ? When you have been poor, and afflicted, then you acknowledge you had need of Mercy : I, but now, whether do you find that your Life is as much a Life of Dependance upon God now, as ever it was ? If God should take away all you have, then you would think, O, I must live altogether the Life of Dependance ; but certainly, you should now live the Life of Dependance, as if you knew not where to have your Dinner or Supper : *Man lives not by Bread only, saith the Scripture, or by Meat ; but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God : he lives by it.* There is much in this that I am speaking : But a little for the further putting of you on in this, that you may learn this Lesson of Abundance :

Consider but this, What a great Mercy of God it is to you, that your great Work that you are put now upon, it is how to improve Mercy ; whereas the work of other Men, it is how to get Mercy : Other Men, all their Care and Thoughts is, how they should get Necessaries ; and now that that God calls you to, it is to Improve what you have. The Life of many Men and Women, is this, Nothing else but to Improve Mercy, not to bear Affliction much, or to seek to get ; but the whole Course of their Life is to be spent in Improving Mercy. Think but of this one thing, and it will make you Thankful ; when you are in your Families, What have I to do in the Morning when I rise ? Nothing but to Improve the Mercy that God gives me : Mercy meets with me when I rise ; Mercy goes forth with me ; Mercy comes in with me, and I have nothing

thing to do from the Beginning of the Year, to the End of the Year, but to make use of Mercy: Why this is the Lives of many to receive in Mercy, and make use of it for God: O the comfortable Life that thou hast! Therefore seeing that God puts thee upon such a Notable and Excellent Imployment thou hadst need be Faithful. Thy work is a great deal better, and more Comfortable than the works of others; therefore often Examine thy Heart. And, O that I could but prevail thus far with Men and Women, that have great Estates, that there should never a Day pass but they would call themselves to Examination! Have I learned to be full? Do I enjoy my fulness for God, yea or no? Do not let the Reckoning between God and thy Soul, run too long, but keep thy Book even every day with God, and then thou shalt have abundance of Comfort in thy Fulness.

And set before you the Example of those that have Miscarried in their Fulness, and that will be a very good help unto you. Such and such Men have Miscarried, Lord help me that I may not Miscarry, as they have done: Yea, thy most eminent Servants have Miscarried, the Lord help me that I may not Miscarry.

And for the Close of all, O you that God hath given these Mercies to; Bless Him for His Blessings: but especially Bless Him that He hath Blessed His Blessings to you. When we receive a Blessing, we should Bless God; I, but when God hath Blest this Blessing, then our Blessing of Him should be Double and Trebble too. O think thus with thy self, What all this and Heaven too! such convenient Habitations, and compassed round about with Mercy wheresoever you are! All this, and Heaven, House and Estate, and Friends, and Health of Body,



Body, and every Thing that I want: O the greatest thing that I want, is a thankful Heart, for if I had but that, then I were happy indeed. Now for a Man to have all things in a Fulness, and only Scantiness in Thankfulness; every thing is full, but only the Heart is empty. The Heart of the Wicked is little worth. Thy House is full, and thy Estate, but what's thy Heart in the mean time? But now, If God gives thee so much Mercy in the World, and all this but the beginning of Heaven to thee: O then, how sweet is thy Life made to thee by God! And all things that are the means of Undoing of others, are the means to help thee to Honour God. O by this the Mercies of God are raised indeed: Bless God for so great a Blessing, it is not an ordinary thing.

Only one thing more for the Close of all in my Text, and that is the joyning of both these things together, That I learn how to be content, and how to be full. There should have been that Note. And that is,

Obs.

That Grace will help Men to carry themselves evenly with God, and graciously with God in variety of Conditions. Let the Condition be up and down, this way, and then another, yet Grace helps a Man to lie square any way, like a Dye; cast it which way you will it lies square: So put a gracious Heart into any Condition, Full or Empty, yet Grace will help him in any Condition whatsoever, as the Apostle saith in the *Corinthians*: *Through Honour and Dishonour, by Evil report and Good report, by the Armour of Righteousness, on the Right-hand and on the Left.* We find Use of our Weapons on the Right hand, and on the Left, the Armour of Righteousness helps not only on the Left-hand to Fence off the evil of Adversity, but on the Right-hand, to Fence off the Evil of Prosperity: Here's a Christian Souldier, that

that can make use of the Armor of Righteousness, both on the Right-hand and on the Left.

I had thought to have given some grounds, Why it is that Grace will help any way; as a Watch in a Mans Pocket, if it be a good Watch, though a Man sit upon it, and it is tumbled up and down, yet the Wheels they keep a constant steady motion. So it is with the heart of a man; if there be Grace within, and the wheels work aright, yet Grace makes the Heart stedfast within, let the condition be never so various; to be tost up and down, this way, or that way; yet the heart keeps the same. The Motto of Queen Elizabeth may be the Motto of every gracious heart, *Alwayes the same*. So in a constant way, either in prosperity or adversity, still he continues in an evenness with God. If God casts him upon his Sick Bed there he rejoyces in God and blesses God, and you will find savory and spiritual things come from him then; and if God deliver him, and you find him in prosperity, there his heart is heavenly still, and gracious and spiritual, and raised above the Creatures; which way soever he be put.

I cannot give you the grounds, I'll onely compare a Scripture or two together (and so conclude all) to see the evenness of the heart of a godly man in all conditions, let them be what they will. In *Psal. 57. To the chief Musician Al-taschith, Mictam of David, when he fled from Saul in the Cave*. That's the Title of the Psalm. A Psalm that David made in his very great affliction, when he fled from Saul for his life in the Cave. See what he saith, and comparing that same with *Psal. 60. where it is, To the chief Musician upon Shushan-Eduth, Mictam of David; to teach, when he strove with Aram Naharaim, and with Aram Zobah, when Joab returned and smote of*

L Edora

Edom in the Valley of Salt; Twelve thousand. David was low when he fled from Saul in the Cave; there David had not the Kingdom; well but afterwards David was high and had the Kingdom, Joab was his Officer, and smote of Edom in the Valley of Salt Twelve thousand: Now you would think that this different condition of David, should have made a different work in his Spirit; yet you shall find a great part of that Psalm to be the very same: In the 57th. Psalm, ver. 7. *My heart is fixed, O God; my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise; awake up my Glory, awake Psalter and Harp, I my self will awake early, I will praise the Lord among the People, I will sing unto Thee among the Nations, &c.* Why, you shall find likewise, that David in the 60th. Psalm, he hath much of this, of blessing God as well in his Prosperous state in which he was, as in his Afflicted estate. Let us compare this with the 108th. Psalm, ver. 5. *Be thou Exalted, O God.* There David was in his Prosperous estate: And here's the same Expression; *O God, my heart is fixed*, saith he, *I will sing and give praise with my Glory. Awake Psalter and Harp, I my self will awake early: I will praise Thee, O Lord, among the People, and I will sing Praises unto Thee among the Nations, &c.* Just he goes on in the very same words.

But now the 60th. Psalm, is to be compared with the 108th, where it is, *God hath spoken in his Holiness, I will rejoyce: I will divide Shechem, and mete out the Valley of Succoth: Gilead is mine, Ephraim also is the strength of my Head, Judah is my Law-giver, &c.* Now in the 108 Psalm, *God hath spoken in his Holiness, I will rejoyce, I will divide Shechem, &c.* This is the Note from hence. (and so we have done.)

That David in his various Conditions, though at some times

times more Prosperous than others, yet still you find him in the same Spirit, and almost the very same words. Be he in the Cave, or when *Joab* had overcome, or be he afterwards how he will, in a higher Condition; for the 108th Psalm was made in a time after this: Yet *David's* heart is the same, Praising God, Blessing God, Believing in his Word, Trusting in his Word: Now that's the Note.

You should observe; Whether you can make use of the same Scripture in one Condition, as in another: Those Scriptures that are comfortable to you in one Condition, make use of them in another. And whether you can Praise God in one Condition, in the same way as in another. Why Grace doth so satisfy and strengthen the Heart, as the things that are without in the World, makes very little alteration: There is very little alteration, that External things can make in a Gracious heart. When a Man or Woman is so, that a Prosperous condition puffs him up, or Adversity makes him dejected, it's a sign of very little Grace, or no Grace. But thus much for this Text.

L 2

A Ser

# A Sermon.

1 Sam. 3. the latter part of the 18th. Verse.

*And he said, it is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good.*

**T**Hese Words are the Expression of a Gracious, Humble, Submissive Heart, to Gods Dispose. The Words of Ely the Priest, who when the Hand of God was revealed against his Family, he here falls down before Him, and saith, *It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good.*

*It is the Lord:* Whatever the means be, that such and such sad things should fall upon my Family, yet, *It is the Lord.*

*Let Him do what seemeth Him good.* The things seem hard to me, but they may seem otherwise to God; whatever things seem to me, however dark they look, yet to God, things may seem after another manner; and therefore let things be done rather as they seem to God, than as they seem to me.

We have in the Words before you, these Four Doctrinal Points.

I. The first is, That a Gracious Heart looks much to God.



God in every Affliction that doth befall it: *It is the Lord.*

Secondly, The sight of God in an Affliction, is II.  
That that causes a gracious Heart humbly to fall down,  
and to submit: *It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth  
Him good.*

Thirdly, That things seem oftentimes far other- III.  
wise to us, than they do to God; God looks upon things  
otherwise than we do: *Then let Him do what seemeth  
Him good.* Not what seemeth good to me, nor what  
seems good to others, but unto God.

Then fourthly, That this is a very Commendable IV.  
and Acceptable work, upon the first Manifestation of  
any Displeasure of God, presently to yield and submit  
without any more adoe: Not after a great deal of rig-  
gling and stir, then to yield; but to yield presently:  
upon the first Manifestation against his Family, he pre-  
sently falls down, and saith, *It is the Lord, let Him do  
what seemeth Him good.* These are the four Conclu-  
sions in the Text, and I shall desire to go through them  
all, and speak to mine own Heart and yours in them:  
It is the Second that is the chief and main, there we  
shall pitch most.

But briefly of the First:—

I.  
That a gracious Heart in all Afflictions, looks up  
to God: *It is the Lord.* Not this Cause, and the other  
Cause, or this Accident, or the other thing, that takes  
up his Thoughts so much, but God in it. The truth is,  
a Heart that is truly Gracious, loves to converse with  
God in every thing. If it be a Mercy, presently the  
Heart gets through the Creatures, by which God bestows  
a Mercy, and looks up to the God of that Mercy: And  
so if it be Afflictions, the Heart that is Gracious, having  
some

some of the Divine Nature in it, presently works its self up to God, in the 6th. of *Micah*, ver. 9. there's a famous Scripture for this: Saith the Prophet there, *The Lords Voice crieth unto the City, and the Man of Wisdom shall see thy Name; hear ye the Rod, and who hath appointed it.* The Man of Wisdom shall see thy Name: The Name of God is written upon his Rod, and where there is a Man of Wisdom, he sees the Name of God that is there written. It's a special part of the Wisdom of a Christian, to be able to see Gods Name, and to read Gods Name written upon his Rod: The Men of the World have not the skill to read the Name of God written upon his Rod; but it's a priviledge of the Saints, that they see Gods Name written there. It is a special part of the Worship that is due to God, the Acknowledgment of God in all his Administrations. That's Worship, when we acknowledge God in all his Providences towards us, *In all thy wayes acknowledge Him;* and in all *His Wayes* he must be acknowledged: As we must acknowledge God in all *our wayes*, so we must acknowledge God in all *His Wayes*, and thereby we come to Worship Him.

Secondly, It's a means to compose the Heart, to strike the Heart with awful Fears and Reverence of God, when we look at Him in our Afflictions, and beyond the Creature. It is a Way to make us search and examine our Hearts, what there is between God and us; when once we take notice it's God that doth it, this presently puts the Heart upon a Scrutiny; What is there between God and my Soul? What is there between God and my Family?

And then it is a special means to put the Soul on to seek God for Help, for Assistance, for Blessing, for a Sanctified Use of what ever Affliction is upon it. There's

a great deal of good in seeing the Lord in an Affliction, in seeing that we have to deal with Him; but the special good is, that that we shall come to in the second Point. The working of the humble submission of the Heart to God. Only for the present, let this Rebuke such who are of Carnal and Atheistical spirits, That whatever befalls them, look no higher than the Creatures by which God works. It's an Argument that they have little to do with God, that they know not what it is to Converse with God, that will cry out of their Afflictions: *They howl upon their Beds,* as the Holy Ghost saith in the 7th. of *Hosea*, *But they seek not to Me, or turn not to Me.* And such as have slight and vain hearts in the time of their Afflictions, it's a very ill thing that; for Men to think to take Courage to themselves, so as not at all to be sensible of the Hand of God. God expects we should be so, though we should not have dishonoured Hearts, yet we should have precious Hearts. For when one have to deal with God in any thing, we had need be serious, the Presence of God should work our Hearts to Seriousness: And therefore slightness and vanity of Spirit in the day of Affliction, it is very unbecoming. Thou dost not sanctifie the Name of God in that Administration of His towards thee, who hast a vain and slight Spirit in the Day of thine Affliction? And surely that's an Argument that thou never sawest God in His Mercy, when thou dost not see him in thine Afflictions: but that thou didst enjoy Gods Mercy but in a Brutish way, when thou dost behave thy self under thine Afflictions in a Brutish way. But this shall suffice for the first.

The second, and that's the main: That the sight of the Hand of the Lord, is that that hath a great deal of Power in it, to work the Heart that is Gracious, to

II.

an humble submission to Him. *It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good.*

That that's here spoken of *Ely*, we may find mentioned by divers of the Servants of God in Scripture: I'll give you but only two Scriptures for it, and those are concerning *David*. In this Book of *Sam.* 15. 25. *If I shall find favour in the Eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it, (that is) the Ark and the City, and his Habitation; but if he should say, I have no delight in thee, behold, here am I, let him do to me, as seemeth good unto him.* So you see how *David*, he looks up to God here: If I find favour in the Eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again; and if he say, I have no delight in thee, behold, here I am, let Him do what seemeth good unto him. And in the 39th. *Psal.* ver. 9. *I was dumb, I opened not my Mouth, because thou diddest it.* It was the sight of the Lord in it, that made him Dumb, and not open his Mouth: And you know what He did in the case of *Shimei*, when He Curs'd him, *The Lord hath bid him*, saith he. Now this Point is very large, I shall briefly propound unto you, the several Considerations from the Hand of God in an Affliction, for to quiet the Heart, and to help the Heart to sanctifie his Name.

As first *Thus, It is the Lord*: It is he that is infinitely above me, above us all, and therefore He must be submitted to. It is the Great and Blessed God, that is infinitely above Angels, and above all Creatures that hath done it; and therefore He must be submitted to. It may be you could not tell how to bear a Box on the Ear from an Inferiour, or an Equal, or from one a little above you: But if so be a King should be near and strike you, you could bear that; you would not be so ready to rise against him, as against an Inferiour mans striking

speaking of you. Why, *It is the Lord*, that is Infinite above us; that is the Infinite, Glorious, and Blessed God, He must be submitted to.

Yea, Secondly, *It is the Lord*, that hath the absolute Right to us, and all that we have; more than we have to our selves, or any thing that we enjoy. *It is the Lord*, that hath the absolute Authority over us, to do with us what He will; you have not so much authority over a Worm under your feet, as God hath over you, and over all your Comforts; you have not so much right to kill a Fly, as the Lord hath to take away your Lives: He hath more Right a thousand thousand times over your Lives, Families, Comforts, and all you have, than you have over the meanest Creature, He hath the absolute Right over you all. If any thing be done amiss in a Family, and the Servants be falling out one with another, and one saith you did thus and thus, and the other saith you did it, and so are wrangling one with another; now if the Master comes, and saith, Why? It was I that did it: He makes account that this should still them all, because it was he that had right to do it. Why, *It is the Lord*, and therefore it is not for us to stand Fretting against any means: For it is the Great, Sovereign Lord, that hath the absolute Power and Dominion over us.

And then, Thirdly, It is the Lord we have sinn'd against, and hath us at infinite Advantages that way: It is the Lord that we are liable unto. While we are here in this World, and carry about with us so much sin, we cannot have any serious Thoughts of God, but we must needs have Thoughts how we have sinn'd against this God, and what advantages this God hath us at, in respect of our sin. O that *It is the Lord*, that we have offended and sinn'd against.

M

Fourthly,



Fourthly, Hence it follows, *It is the Lord*, and therefore it is He; that if He hath brought a little Affliction, He may bring abundantly more if He please. It is He, whose Power as it is not shorned in a way of Help, so not in a way of Affliction: Hath He afflicted in one kind; He might in a hundred, if he pleased? Hath He afflicted thee in thy *Estate*, He might have afflicted thee in thy *Body*? Hath He afflicted thee in thy *Body*, He might have afflicted thee in thy *Soul*? Hath He afflicted thee in thy *Soul* here, He might have sent thee down to *Hell eternally*? Is it upon any within thy Dwelling-place, it might have been upon thy self? It is the Lord that hath us under His feet. And if He bring the least evil, He might have brought as much as He pleased: He might have afflicted us abundantly more than He hath done. And this is a mighty humbling Consideration to quiet the Heart, under the Hand of God.

And then, Fifthly, *It is the Lord*. Why, it is the Lord that hath done all the Good that ever we have enjoyed: It is He that hath done all Good to us. You have an Affliction, but have you no Mercies? Do you enjoy no Good? Why, from whence was it, was it not from the Lord? *Shall I receive Good from the Hand of the Lord, and not Evil*, saith *Job*. Why, even the Savage Beasts will bear strokes from them that feeds them: The very Bears will suffer the Bearherd that brings them Meat, to strike them; they will not suffer a stranger so much, but those that bring them Meat: They receive good from them, and therefore they will submit to them. Now we receive infinite Good from God, daily Good, and that's a very useful Meditation for us to consider of, in times of Affliction: There's this Good, or that particular Good taken from me, but what do I enjoy, or what

have

have I enjoyed? It's a usual thing in Afflictions, to keep the sight of God from us: As the putting a thing but as big as a Two-pence upon the Eye, it will keep the sight of all the Heavens from us; and so a little Afflictions many times keeps the sight of all the Good that we do enjoy from us. But when we consider it is the Lord, the infinite Fountain of all Good, this is a mighty quieting Consideration.

Sixthly, *It is the Lord*: He is Just and Righteous in all his Proceedings, there's nothing but Righteousness in Him in all His Wayes: *In very Faithfulness*, saith David, *hast thou afflicted me*. It may be some affliction may come from Men, and we may think they deal Unrighteously and Unjustly; but it is the Lord, and there is nothing but Righteousness in all His Wayes. If we should think, Why, these afflictions, they fall upon me, and such and such, they escape. You must not reason so, It is the Lord, and therefore it is Righteous. You think it might be better thus and thus, but it is the Lord, that is Just and Righteous in all His Proceedings, and in all His Wayes. Yea,

Seventhly, As Righteous so infinitely Wise: He is Infinitely Wise, and so knows how to Order things in the best way that may be; He knows what's fittest both for us, and for His own Glory: We are poor weak Creatures, but it's the Lord that sees Infinitely beyond us.

Eighthly, *It is the Lord*, that hath alwayes very Holy ends; in all His Dealings He hath Holy ends, and Aims at Great and Holy things; though perhaps we know them not; and therefore He is to do whatsoever He will. We use to say of a Man, if we see him to be a Wise and Understanding man, yea, a Just man, and to be a man that does all things alwayes from good Principles, and for good

But, let him alone, though we do not understand what he is doing; yet let him alone; he knows what he doth: *It is the Lord*, let Him alone in His work, let Him do what seemeth Him good.

Ninthly, *It is the Lord*, and He is able to bring good out of the greatest evils, to bring light out of darkness; yea, to bring the greatest good out of the greatest evils. I verily believe, that many of the People of God have found it so, That the greatest Blessings that ever they have had since they were born, have been Ushered in by the greatest Afflictions. Certainly, as the Lord would not suffer sin in the World, were it not for His Infinite Power, to bring about Good from the sins of men; so neither would He suffer Afflictions in the World to His Saints, but that He knows He hath Power enough to bring good to them, even out of their greatest Afflictions. *It is the Lord*, that hath this Power. One would be loath to trust ones self with one in any Danger, that cannot tell how to bring him out again: You would be loath to see your Child held over the Water by another little Child, or over a Fire; but if a strong Man hath your Child in his Arms, and holds it over the Water, and you know him to be your loving Friend, it troubles you not at all: Why? Because you know he hath strength enough to keep your Child from the Danger. Why, *It is the Lord*, that though He holds His Children over Fire or Water, and brings them into Fear and Afflictions; yet He hath Power enough not only to preserve them, but to bring a great deal of Good out of all, and therefore let Him do what seemeth Him good.

Tenthly, *It is the Lord*, therefore submit to Him, for His Counsel must stand, and His Work must go on, there is no striving with the Almighty: Are we greater than

than He? No! Instead of striving, let there be submitting and yielding.

Eleventhly, Yea, and further, *It is the Lord*, and therefore He is worthy that His Designs should be brought about, though we should be ruined: There is such infinite Excellency in this God (as I say) He is worthy to have his own Designs brought about, and His own Will fulfilled, though it be to our Ruins: Doth God think man so excellent a Creature, as that He shall give thousands of other Creatures for to help him; with the loss of their own Lives? And shall not we think the Lord to be infinitely worthy, if He have use of our Lives, or Liberties, or Names, or any thing; that He should not have all, to bring about his Designs withal? O, he is worthy, and therefore *let Him do what seemeth Him good*. If so be he will raise up any building of his in our ruins, we should be willing to be serviceable to God in it; we should be willing to lie down and let all that we have go, that may be any way serviceable to God in his designs; for the Lord is worthy.

These Considerations may be very useful to help you in the day of Affliction, to meditate of God; and so to work your hearts to an humble submission: but especially if you add this one more.

Twelfthly, When you do not onely see him to be *Jehovah, the Lord*; but if you can see that you have any interest in him, as that he is the Lord *your God*; this is of mighty power to quiet the heart: as if he be your God, why then he is in Covenant with you, and if he be in Covenant with you, then he hath engaged all his Wisdom, and all his Power, and all his Mercy, for to be working eternally for your good; and that is more than a meer consideration that he is a Lord; and that he is above us, and just and holy,

and that it is in vain not to submit unto Him. But it is the Lord that is in Covenant with me, and in that Covenant he hath engaged all his Power and Wisdom, and Mercy and Goodness for me. Did we but understand what the Covenant of God in Jesus Christ was, that he hath taken his Servants into; O then this thought, It is the Lord in Covenant with me, would be enough to enable us to resign up our selves wholly to his disposal.

Thirteenthly, Yea, 'Tis the Lord that is our Father. You know what Christ saith, *shall I not drink the Cup that my Father giveth me to drink.* That was the Argument of Christ: O that this were in all our thoughts at all times, when any thing, though it be never so grievous, befalls us, *shall I not drink the Cup that my Father giveth me to drink?* Whatsoever it be, if it comes out of a Fathers hand, why let Him do what seemeth him good. You know when Christ came to the Disciples walking upon the waters, and the Disciples were afraid; *Be not afraid, 'tis I;* saith Christ. They were troubled at it, and thought that one came as an Enemy to do them hurt; but *be not afraid, 'tis I;* saith Christ. So my Brethren, we should look in all afflictions to see who it is that comes; we apprehend an Enemy coming, but now those that are godly; they may look upon him that comes as God, *Be not afraid,* saith the Lord, *it is I;* It's I that am reconcil'd to you in my Son. Upon this the soul may with abundance of sweetness and comfort; go to God in Prayer, and open it self to God; having an interest in him. You know, If a great Dog should come with full mouth upon one, why indeed, if so be that he that comes to a house be a thief, he hath cause to fear; but if he be a Child, he can call to his Father, the Master of the house, Take off your Dog. So when afflictions come



to the wicked, they come with open devouring mouth; and they have cause to be afraid; but those that have interest in God, may go with freedom unto God in prayer, and cry to the Lord to take off the dog, the affliction; to keep it that it should do them no hurt at least: *It is the Lord.*

*Object.* I but you will say, That though it be the Lord, yet it's this indeed that rather makes my affliction the greater; to consider it comes from God: The thought that it's God in it strikes terror; because I am conscious of sin against God. It is an affliction that comes for my sin, and therefore I see the displeasure of God in it; and this makes it more grievous. I would rather bear any thing from a creature, than to bear the displeasure of God in a creature; that's that that is the greatest sick of all, and therefore every time I think it is the Lord, it rather adds to mine affliction.

*Ans.* To that I answer, First, It's true, many men that think that all is well between God and them in the time of their health and prosperity, yet when affliction comes, God appears to them, and they look upon God as an Enemy; this is dreadful: It's a fearful thing when God is a terror to a man in the day of Calamity. You know what *Jeremy* saith *Jer. 17. 17.* *Be not thou a terror to me, O Lord, for thou art my hope in the day of evil.* If the soul may have God to be the hope of it in the day of evil, there's no evil terrible; but if God be a terror then too, and write bitter things against the soul in the time of affliction, that's dreadful.

But yet suppose thou seest God, even as an Enemy coming against thee; yet the consideration that it is the Lord, should make thee submit at least: For it is time for thee then to submit, if so be that God as an Enemy appears.

appears against thee: It's time for thee to make haste to make thy peace with God; yea, and thou hast the more cause to bless God, that he hath not destroyed thee. What dost thou apprehend God as an Enemy? O then, it's infinite Mercy thou art not destroyed. Certainly, if He be an Enemy to thee now, He was an Enemy before; only we are ready to judge according to present Administration. But this is certain, If God be an Enemy now, He was an Enemy all the time thou hadst thy Health, and wast in thy uttermost Prosperity; it's time for thee then to fall down, and make peace. And what infinite cause hast thou to wonder, that thou art not utterly destroyed; and therefore reason to submit unto Him.

But yet it is a weakness in the Saints, and a temptation, often to judge of Gods dealings thus, and to think that every time God appears against them, as if he were in hatred: As the People of *Israel*, in their Murmuring Discontented Mood, He brought us out of Egypt into this Wilderness, because He hated us; say they. O, this was wicked, and displeased God exceedingly. As we are not to judge of Gods Love by outward Prosperity, so not of His Hatred by outward Afflictions.

*Object.* 2. But though I dare not think that God comes in a way of Hatred and Enmity, yet there's a great deal of Displeasure for my sin; and it's that that makes it grievous to me.

And mark, Even this that was threatened to *El*, it was threatned for his sin, and yet he falls down and submits, and saith, *It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good.* Yea, and we find the Servants of God, when they apprehended God appearing against their sin, that Consideration did quiet them so much the more.

*Altho.*

*Mich. 7. 9, I will bear the Indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against Him: (Because.)* And that fore-named place concerning David, *2 Sam. 15. 26,* where you have such a Wonderful Gracious and Humble Submission unto the Dispose of God; where he saith, *If He hath no pleasure in me, let Him do what seemeth Him good.* Why David was under almost as sore an Affliction as a man could be under, and it was for his sin too: Yea, it was for a great sin, it was for his sin of Uncleanness, and his sin of Murder, that he was fain to flie for his Life, even before his own Son. It was as sore and hard an Affliction, and there was as much of the sting of the guilt of sin in it, as any Affliction of any of the People of God, that ever we read of: And yet how humbly he submits, *If he saith I have no delight in him, behold, here I am, let him do what seemeth him good.*

However, there is a vain Conceit abroad in the World, as if God chastised not his People for sin at all: Yet certainly, the People of God, that walk close with God, they find there is a Chastisement, and a Fatherly Displeasure, though not the Revenge of a Judge. And certainly, there can be no Argument taken from the absolute satisfaction of Christ, to prove that there is no Chastisement for sin; for Christ did satisfie as fully for David and Ely, that were under the Law: They had the satisfaction of Christ perfect as well as you. Would it have been (do you think) a good Argument then, That if God Chastised for sin, he did not do justly, because Christ satisfied Gods Justice: Why did not Christ satisfie Gods Justice then? It was not a good Argument then, certainly it is not to now: And for the New Testament, *For we are Chastised of the Lord, that you might not be condemned with the World, 1 Cor. 11. 32.* But I'll give you

you one other Scripture, and that is is the Epistle of James 5. 14, 15. *Is any sick among you, let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, &c. The Prayer of Faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.* Here the Apostle writes to the Saints, and speaks of Godly People, and speaks of them indefinitely: If any of them, if the most Godly in all the Church were sick, why, saith he, let him send for the Elders and let them Pray; and if he hath committed sins, then they shall be forgiven him. So that *any* of the Saints may be in such a condition, as they may be Afflicted, and Afflicted for their sin; *If they have sinned, then they shall be forgiven.* To make this Supposition, and yet that this shall be a Truth, That it's impossible for any Godly People to be Afflicted for their sin, were a Contradiction: For to say thus, If any Godly People be sick, let them take this Course, let them send for the Elders, and let them pray; and if they have committed sin, it shall be forgiven them. And yet the other to stand true, That no Godly People can be Afflicted for their sin: Certainly, these two cannot stand together,

You will say, If they have committed sin, it shall be forgiven: Was it not forgiven before?

True, they are forgiven in respect of Gods eternal Wrath, or in respect of the Guilt that binds them over to the satisfying of Revenging Justice: They are forgiven that, but they are not so forgiven, but that they need a *Fatherly* forgiveness still. Christ hath taken away already at first the Revenge of a Judge, but He hath not taken away all Fatherly Displeasure by his satisfying; For that's not at all to satisfy Justice: But God doth  
reserve

reserve this to himself, to deal with them as a Father. Indeed, through Christs satisfying, God will never deal with his People as a Judge to Revenge; but this doth not put them out of his way of dealing with them as a Father, and they have need of Fatherly forgiveness still. And this is that that Christ teaches every one to pray; *Forgive us our sins, forgive us our Trespases.* Some other Pleas and Objections may be made, but I shall rather hasten to the Use of the Point.

Is the sight of God that, that should cause us humbly to submit? O let what hath been said in these several Considerations, serve to rebuke our Impatience, our Fretting, and sinking Discouragements. Who art thou? And what art thou, that thou shouldest keep a stir under any hand of God? Do not say, It is so great, and if it were any other Affliction, I would bear it; it is not for thee to choose thy Rod: And thou canst not speak more of thy Affliction, than *David* might have done of his: And therefore whatever thy thoughts may be, be humbled before God, that thou hast had any kind of Murmuring, or Impatience under the Hand of God, any stirrings that way: Who art thou, that thou must not be dealt withal, so as God hath dealt with others of his Saints before, or as he doth deal with any others now? There's a notable Scripture; O that it might have but such an effect as it had on *Job*! Compare these two in the Book of *Job*, *Job* 38. 2. *Who is this that darketh Counsel by words without Knowledge.* The Lord saith thus to *Job*: Who is this whose heart doth fret and is so impatient, who is it? Mark now afterwards, if you read the Scripture, from this place, till you come to *Chap.* 42. you shall find that God is Manifesting himself there, and Revealing himself in his Glory and Righteousness to *Job*: Now



in the 3d. verse, *Job* takes up the very words to himself, that God had before spoken: Saith *Job*, *Who is he that hideth Counsel without Knowledge? Therefore have I uttered that I understood not, things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.* God he saith, *Who is this that uttereth words without knowledge? And then he shews himself; Look upon me, is it not I that have done it? Then Job saw that it was God that did it. I have meddled with things that I understood not, I have troubled my self like a Fool in things that I did not understand: O foolish wretched heart that I have! And then afterwards he saith, I have heard of thee by the hearing of the Ear, but now mine Eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor my self, and repent in Dust and Ashes.* As if he should say, I'll never be Impatient more, I'll never have any risings of heart more against any of thy dealings towards me: For, Lord, now I see that I heard of thee; before I could have said, All things come by the Providence of God: I could have said so, I, but now mine Eyes see thee, I have the sight of that Glorious, Infinite Majesty of thine, that art so infinitely Great, Blessed, and Holy; and therefore now I abhor my self in Dust and Ashes: Let become of me what will, I have learned for ever to sanctifie that Holy Name of thine, *It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good.*

*Exhort.* And therefore by way of Exhortation: O my Brethren, I beseech you apply these things unto your selves: In some of your Thoughts (it seems) I have been as Dead, hear then somewhat that I am this day to say to you; as you know *Drus* said, *If one come from the Dead, they will hear him.* Here what I have to say to you from this Point.

His house  
being vi-  
sited, it  
was  
thought  
he was  
Dead.

*First*, O let this sink into your hearts, as if one should

should come from the Dead to speak it to you, namely this. That God is so infinitely worthy of Honour from you, that you should be at a point, whether you Honour him either in the enjoyment of Mercy, or suffering of Affliction, it's no great matter: The Honour of God should be so dear to you, and you should so much love him, your hearts should be so much with God, as you should leave it wholly to himself, which way he would be Honoured by you. Surely, though we think we have a Love to God, and we would Honour him, yet our Love to God, and desire to Honour him, is very little: If so be that we do not wholly resign up our selves to him, to do in us and by us, as he will: then indeed, is the heart right. And this is Honouring God as a God, when there is a full yielding up of the heart, and when it is in a manner indifferent what way God will take. Then your hearts are come to a right frame.

*Secondly*, The second thing that I would say to you, is this, That there is so great evil in sin (and O that God would make it take as great an Impression upon you, as if one from the Dead spake it) as the least stopping one in the way of sin, the least abating the power of sin hath so much good in it, as it's enough to countervail the greatest evil in the greatest Afflictions in the World. O this Principle would be of mighty use in the heart of People, when any Affliction doth befall them or their Family; but doth God by this (at least) stop me in any way of sin? Doth not God by this, some way, or other, help me against some sin? O then, the Affliction is well paid for. I have now a greater good abundantly, than the evil of the Affliction comes to; There was a little bitter, but here's a great deal more sweet.

*Thirdly*, There is more good in any Exercise of my Grace,

Grace, than there is evil in the bearing of any *Affliction*: If God doth bring an *Affliction* but for the Exercise of any Grace, or for the stirring up thy heart but to look towards him, there may be more good in that, than there is evil in any *Affliction*. Perhaps thou art going up and down muddling in the World, and thy Thoughts were but little upon him before; why if by *Afflictions* thou comest but to look after God, this is a greater good than the evil of the *Affliction* comes to. But if God Blesses thee so as thou comest to Exercise Grace in it, Humility, Patience, Self-denial, Faith; O here thine *Affliction* is abundantly made up: Oh! labour therefore upon the Consideration of this, that *It is the Lord*, to submit humbly to him; this is acceptable to God. Suppose you have two Children that were sick, it may be one he riggles and keeps a stir, and will take nothing that you give him; but now you have another Child lins, and he is sick too, and he saith, Father, Mother, I'll do what you will have me, I'll take what you will give me, do but tell me what you would have done, I'll presently do it; though it be never so grievous and bitter, I'll take it. Now would it not make your hearts relent towards such a Child, that should be so yieldable, will lie this way, or that way, take this thing, or that thing, and all because it comes from a Father: If the Child should say to you, It's true, I am Sick and Ill, but I know you love me, and know what's better for me than I do, and therefore I'll take it: Would not this be very acceptable? O this it is which the Lord accepts, when his Children do behave themselves so under his Afflicting Hand.

And my Brethren, This further helps against a great many Temptations: When *Job* did but say thus, *The Lord*

*Lord groweth, and the Lord taketh away, let Him do what seemeth Him good.* The Devil saw his hopes gone, then his hopes of doing that hurt and mischief that he intended was gone. If the heart is in a safe condition, that is thus submissive unto God: Others that have Fretting Impatient hearts, are subject to abundance of Temptations, but the danger of Temptation is over, when thy heart comes to this.

And this will make the Affliction very easie unto thee, when thou bringest thy heart to this: It may be others may think that's very fore and hard with thee, 1. but thou findest it very easie, abundance of sweetness comes in with this: Yea, I appeal to the Experience of the Saints, that knows but what this means; Whether ever had you more Comfort in all your Lives, than at that time when you have been most Afflicted, and yet brought your hearts to this Temper and Disposition. O therefore learn to work these things upon your hearts. It's an easie matter for Men and Women to speak these things, but to have the effectual working of these things upon the heart, that's not so easie: To sanctifie Gods Name in the Fire. Carnal hearts, they have many poor things to help themselves in their Afflictions: They say thus, It is my ill Fortune this befall me; and another saith this, This befalls all Men, one or other, it's common: Others say thus, We must, we cannot help it, and we must submit to it. Another thinks thus, Why, I hope, it will be over. These are poor Reasonings to work upon the heart, in the day of Affliction: But now a gracious heart should get up higher above all these; *Be still, and know that I am the Lord*, and there look into the Counsels of God, and seek to know the Mind of God, and to sanctifie the Name of God. O, Grace (my Brethren) hath many  
Excel-

Excellencies in it; but among other things, that is the least. That it hath such strength, to be able to overcome in the day of their Affliction, the mighty Power of Suffering the heart, and to take away the sting of all Afflictions, and to carry the Soul safely and comfortably in the time of all Dangers and Trials. O labour to have this wrought upon your hearts! For by this you will manifest much Beauty in Grace, much Excellency in Grace; it will be a means to Convince all that are about you. All those that profess Godliness, should labour to behave themselves so as to do that that others cannot do in the time of Affliction: They should then show the Grace can do. As David in another Case, said to the King of Achish, *Thou shalt see what thy Servant can do.* So now in the time of Affliction, a gracious heart should put it to this, Come let's see what Grace can do. And certainly, this will be the way for removing of Afflictions sooner, when the heart is brought thus to yield unto the Lord: Wherefore that you may bring your hearts to this in the day of your Affliction, labour in the constant Course of your Life, to Converse much with God. Those that walk with God (according to the Text that you know I am upon) and Converse much with God in the day of their Health, why their hearts will in a kind of Natural-way, work up to God in the time of Affliction; then the Thoughts of God will be as suitable to thee, as Fire is to Fire: Fire ascends up to Fire, because of the suitableness of the Fire that is here, to that that is above. Why so the heart will work up to God in a kind of Natural-way, because God is so suitable to the heart, the heart having so much Converse with God in the day of Prosperity.

And labour thoroughly to Convince your hearts of this thing,



thing. That there is no Good in any Creature, but only in the Reference that it hath to God: There is no Good in Health, in Liberty, in your Names, in your Lives, in your Estates, any further than they have some Reference to God, the infinite first Good, the chief and high Good. It's an easie matter in a way of Reason, to Convince any one that this is a Truth. But now to have this Principle indeed wrought upon your heart, not only to say so in a way of Arguing, but I account in my Soul of no good in any thing further, than it hath reference to God. As now, I have for the present Health of Body: Where doth the good of the Health of my Body lie? It is, That while I have Health, I have Ability to serve God, and be useful in the place where God hath set me. I have an Estate, Wherein lies the good of it? It lies in this, That by this I may be Instrumental for God, more than others. If I Live, Wherein lies the good of Life? Why that I may be useful to the Church, in the way wherein God hath set me. Now when the heart is principled in this, then if God takes away my Health then it seems God hath no further use of my Health for the present, but would rather Honour Himself in another way upon me; why now there is no good in my Health. And if God take away my Estate, then he would rather Honour Himself in the exercise of my Humility, and of my Patience. If God takes away my Life, then God will rather have His Honour from my Soul, to joyn with Angels and Saints, in Honouring of Him that way, rather than in Imploying of me any further in this World. Such a Principle as this is, would mightily help the heart in the day of Affliction.

Certainly our Happiness doth not depend upon what we have here in this World: The reason why the heart

is so troubled in the time of Affliction, it is because of this, That Men and Women look upon their Happiness to consist in the enjoyment of these things: O no, thou Dishonourest the Name of Christ, and thy Holy Profession, to think that thy Happiness should depend upon such poor things as these are. Surely, Jesus Christ hath not come to shed His Blood, and to purchase Happiness for the Saints; and when all comes too, it should be so poor as to depend upon all the uncertainty that we have in this World: No, no, thy Happiness lies higher, Thy Life is hid with Christ in God. If a man hath a Jewel worth many Thousands, and his House should be on Fire, why though he loses the Lumber and Stuff in the House, yet if he be sure the Jewel is safe, he is quiet. Now the Saints they may be sure that they are safe for Eternity, and therefore it is not much what other things be. Oh consider of these things, and work them upon your hearts. That's the Second Point.

*Doctr.*

But a word or two of the other, that is: That that which seems ill to us, may seem good to God. *It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good.* Certainly, for the present it did not seem very good to Ely: If that Ely's judgement had been askt of those things, Ely would have said, that they had been very sad. I, but as I remember, Luther once said, when he was Condemn'd and Rail'd upon at Noremberg, saith he, There's one thing Concluded at Noremberg, and another thing Concluded in Heaven: In Heaven there's not the same Judgment of my Cause, as at Noremberg. And so it may be said concerning Affliction, There's one thing many times Concluded in my Wretched, Weak, Foolish, and Unbelieving Heart; and another thing in Heaven: One thing concluded in the world, and in men's rumours, and

and another thing in Heaven. It's some comfort to a man though he hears rumours abroad in the world, if then he can have his own heart to contradict them. If he had nothing else to think but this, Well that that's spoken in the World is one thing, and that that I find in my heart is another; *that's comfortable*: But this is greater comfort, *Then art my portion, saith my Soul*; saith the Church in the Book of the *Lamentations*; as if she should say, Well, the temptation saith that God hath left me, the Devil saith thus; I but thou art my portion, *saith my soul*: That was comfortable. If so be that God speaks peace, it's more than if our own Souls speaks peace; *Then shalt choose our inheritance*: Thy choice is better then our own. If we had alwayes what's good in our own Eyes, wo were to us, we were undone. You would not think it, but certainly it is as heavy a judgment as can befall one in this world; that God should say, *You shall do and you shall have what is good in your own eyes*. Suppose that God should say but this morning concerning every one of you, Well, you shall henceforward have whatsoever is good in your own Eyes, why you would think that you might go away and be glad of this; Glad, you had cause of going away with ringing of Hands, and howling and crying, if God should say thus, concerning any of you. O no, it's better that our Lives, Liberties, Estates, Comforts, Happiness, and all be in Gods Hands than our own, to be disposed of so as seemeth good in Gods Eyes, rather than to be disposed of so as seemeth good in our own Eyes. I verily believe that many of you may be able to look back to the providences of God towards you, and to say, That suppose God had Twenty years ago said to me, *I'll give you leave to dispose of your selves as you would*:

O many may be able to say, They certainly could never have disposed so well of themselves as God hath: And they would be loath to go back again to the Twenty years past, though they should begin and have liberty to dispose of themselves as they please: In Heb. 12. 11. saith the Apostle there, *No Affliction for the present seemeth Joyous to us but Grievous, but afterwards, such the Text, it works thus and thus.* I, but things do seem so to us as they are present alwayes, but they do not seem so to us till afterwards. After the Affliction is over then they seem good to us, but they seem good to God at the very present. We judge things by the outward appearance, but God judges things according to what they are. Things seem to us according as they either make for or against our outward good, we are led so much by sense: But they seem to God according as they are for or against his Glory and the last good of all. They seem good or ill to us according as they are for or against some particular good; if they strike at such a particular we judge by particulars: But now, God he judges things by the proportion they have to the general, to all things at once. It's that that makes us to give very wrong Judgment of things when we look but to particulars, and do not compare one with another, and raise a Judgment upon things all things considered. So God doth, God doth not so much look at things how they are in reference to this or the other good; but how things are in reference to all together in the general. We know some things may cross some particular, but they may be useful to another. Now that thats good in the general doth seem good to God, though it may go cross to some particular.

And then further, We look at things but just as they appear

appear present to us, but now God looks upon things as they shall be a great while hence: God is working that that we shall not understand perhaps in our lives; or working in his Administrations towards us, some thing that he intends shall come to pass a great while hence, so that if they come to pass in our Lives, yet we shall not have the fruit of them for many years. God He looks a great way off.

Wherefore learn by this, Not to be too Sudden, nor so Peremptory, in the judging of Gods Administrations: Why? Why because whatever they may seem to you, they may seem otherwise to God; stay till you know Gods Judgment about them. As you, if you have any Wisdom, when you hear of strange Rumours; if you know that there be any that knows the thing better than you, you will not give a judgment upon it; till you have the judgment of such and such, that you know may understand it better than your self. So in the Wayes of God towards us, Let not us presently give a Judgment upon those things, but let us stay first till we have the Mind of God. O let's learn to resign up our Judgments to Gods, and let Him Judge.

Neither let us trouble our selves about other mens Judgments. As things seem otherwise to God than to us, so they seem otherwise to God than to other men. As we should not trust too much to the judgments of our own hearts; so we should not be so much troubled at other mens Judgments. For whatever they think, still it is otherwise in Gods account. Men, they will say, 'tis for this Cause, and the other Cause, and the like; but it's otherwise concluded in Heaven. And that's the Third Point.

The last should have been this, That 'tis not enough for



for Christians after a great deal of age, to submit to God; that is, after the Affliction hath been upon them a great while, and when they see they cannot help themselves; then to begin to have thoughts of yielding to God. It's well that they do it at last: O but it's more commendable a great deal, if we do it at first. At what instant God strikes, presently for the heart to come in and yield. As it is a most excellent thing to yield to Gods Word when God first speaks, upon the least intimation of Gods Will; O this is acceptable unto God. For those that are young ones, the first time they come to hear the Word; or if not the first time they come to hear it, yet the first time God speaks to their hearts; the very first word that speaks, presently for them to yield, it's a most excellent thing. So in the time of Affliction, for the heart to bow and submit presently to God; O this is an Argument of much cleanness that there is in the heart, that the heart is very clean, that there is not much Corruption there; for then there would be a standing out against God, and it would manifest it self in time of Affliction. As we know where there is Corruption in the Body it will manifest it self, if it come to endure Hardship; so it is with the Soul, &c.

And it argues much Grace, as little Corruption. So there is strength of Grace that can make the Heart bow presently to God. When Grace reigns in the Heart; when Grace can say Come, and the Soul comes, Go, and it goes; when Grace can say, This is the Administration of God towards you; and now you must work thus, and presently the Soul doth it. It should not be enough to us, that we hope that we have that Grace, which possibly may bring us to Heaven at last; but we should labour to have that Grace that may reign in the Heart

now,

now, and bring all into a due Order. As in a Family, when the Governors are Wise, you shall have them, if there be but the least Disturbance, speak but a word, and all is quiet: And you shall have other Families, that where the Reins of Government are loose, if there be but a little Disturbance, it grows more and more, and to such a height, that it's tedious for one that hath a quiet Spirit, to be in the Family: and so it is in the Heart, though the best hath some Disturbance. But now where Grace Rules and Governs, it stills all presently, without any great ado: But now in other men, though they have some Grace, yet if the Heart begins to be in a Disturbance, it's a long time before it can be quieted.

My Brethren, I have gone through these Points briefly, and you will say, 'Tis a harder thing to do this, than to speak it. It's true, it is, yet some of the Saints have done it: They have through the Mercy of God, been brought to these things that have been spoken; and it's possible to be done: Some have attained it, and there is strength enough in Christ, for the weakest to attain it: And He delights as much to Communicate His strength in helping of His poor Servants in the times of Affliction, as at any time.

Consider what hath been said in these several Truths, and lay them up against the Day of your Affliction, that you may say, *It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good.*

A Son

# A Sermon.

Phil. 1. 21.

*For to me to Live, is Christ; and to Die is Gain.*

**T**HIS blessed Apostle *Paul*, had in the Course of his Life, many things befall him that seem to be very Cross, much Opposition, great were his Sufferings, even unto Bonds: And much hard Usage he had, not only from open Enemies, but from false Brethren, whose Spirits were full of Envy against him: And who can stand before Envy? They were vexed to see how his Ministry prevailed in the Hearts of People; to see what great Esteem he had, how precious his Name was among the Saints: They knew not what course to take to Darken him, and therefore among others, some of them would set upon Preaching Christ as well as he, and see what they could do that way; they would be as forward as he. Well, saith *Paul*, all this makes for my Good, and I rejoyce in it, so be it I may be any occasion that Christ may be Preached, whether of Good-will, or Envy: I am glad Christ is made known by this, and this shall turn (saith he) to my Salvation, to the Glory

Glory that I expect from Christ, and with Christ: That shall be furthered by it, so long (saith he) as Christ is Honoured, I shall never be ashamed; No matter what becomes of my Body, of my Life, so that Christ may be Magnified in my Body, whether it be by Life, or by Death: *For to me to Live is Christ, and to Die is Gain.* And this is the Coherence of the Words.

Here then we have a Man of brave Resolution, of a truly Noble raised Spirit; while other men are Grovelling here in the World, in seeking Contentment unto the Flesh: Here's the Spirit of *Paul* raised above Life and Death. *To me to Live is Christ, to Die is Gain.*

*To me to Live is Christ.* You have it in your English, only so (*To Live, and to Die :*) But those that understand the Original, know, that besides the Word that signifies *To Live :* There's an Article in the *Greek*, *Τὸ ζῆν*. And besides that word, there's an Article *ἐν ἀποθανῶντι*. So that if you would have it Translated according to the Propriety and Elegancy of the *Greek*, it is thus: *To me the thing that is to Live is Christ, and the thing that is Death is Gain.* As if he should say, That thing that you call *Life*, is nothing but *Christ* : If *Christ* may be Magnified in me, if I may be of any Service for Him any way, then I am content to Live ; but if so be that He may be no more Served by me here, let me Die, and I shall lose nothing by that neither: For that same thing you call *Death*, the thing that People keep such a stir about, and are so scar'd withal, *That to Die* ; it's nothing to me, but that which will be *Gain*. So that the words, they speak out the frame of a Gracious Heart, blessing it self in Jesus Christ, both in Life and Death : *To me to Live :* I'll not make any curious Definition, nor raise more Points than I shall go through at this time, and

and the Points will be nothing but the opening of the Text in both Parts.

*Doctr.* First, That a true Godly man accounts Christ to be his Life. And,

Secondly, To a Godly man, Death is Gain.

For the First, *To me to Live is Christ*: That same thing that you call life, It's Christ, all is wrapt up in him: I account nothing Life but Jesus Christ. As for my natural Life, that's no way considerable; but so far as Christ is in it, Christ is the life of the Saints. It's more indeed then if he should say, *Christ is my life*. *Ps. 119.* the thing that is to live is Christ; It's a greater Elegancy than to say Christ is my life.

Christ is the life of the Saints: First in this, That they are by him freed from a Legal death. Every man by nature is under the Curse of the Law, he is a dead man, as we say of a man that is condemn'd, he is a dead man; dead by the Law. But now the Saints in Christ, are dead to the Law. *Gall. 2. 19.* But they live to God, they are freed from that Legal death, and so Christ brings life to them.

Secondly, Christ is the principle of Spiritual Life in them. It's Christ that brings me to the Fountain of Life, that unites my Soul again to God; and puts me in a principle of Life, to enable me to live to God, and to enjoy communion with him; I in my self am as a dead Carcase without Jesus Christ. *To me to live is Christ.*

Thirdly, Christ is the preserver of this life of mine. Notwithstanding all the corrupt and filthy and dead stuff that is in me, yet Jesus Christ preserves this life in me.

And then in the Fourth place, which I take to be the chief meaning of what the Apostle intends; *To me to live*

*live*



*live to Christ*, that is, the great comfort of my Life, that's Christ. A man doth not live except he hath Comfort in his Life: For so the Scripture calls Life, when a man hath Comfort, Joy, and Contentment in his Life, *Psalm* 38. 19. *But mine Enemies are lively*; so you have it in your Books: Mine Enemies are *living*, so you may Translate it; the meaning is this, Mine Enemies are Jolly, and Jocond in their wayes: And so it follows, *And they are strong*: They are Jolly and Jocond in their wayes; and they that hate me wrongfully, are multiplied. There's a like phrase in *Eccles. 6. 8.* *For what hath the Wise more than the Fool, what hath the Poor that knoweth to walk before the Living*: That is, before the Rich men that have all Comforts in their Lives, to Live bravely, according to their hearts desire. What's the Wise more than the Fool? All things comes alike to them, and there's no great difference in their Lives. And what *bath*, (the word *bath* is not in the Original) but what a Poor that knoweth to walk before the Living. If a Poor man hath but Health of Body, and hath but Ability to work, and Wisdom to carry himself, and order his Affairs; why he can walk before Rich men, and can live a Comfortable life before them. *Before the Living*, that is, before the Rich that have all things to Live bravely in the World. So that's the meaning of *Life* in Scripture, not only in opposition to *Death*, but to *Sorrow* and *Trouble*. Now saith the Apostle, *To me to live is Christ*: Will you take *Life* in this sense, that is, for a Comfortable, a Contented, a Joyful life? Why I have it saith *Paul*: Where had *Paul* such a Joyful and Contented life? For alas, look upon him in the Course of his Life, and he suffered almost as much as ever man did; sometimes he wanted Bread, and he wanted Clothes to

cover the Nakedness of his Body, and whipt like a Rogue, and yet he accounted himself to live a brave life notwithstanding all this: But where lay all this? In Christ. I find it all made up in Christ, whatsoever I want in the Creature, whatever is cast upon me, whatever Scorn and Imprisonment; whatever it be that here I suffer, yet I find it all made up in Christ, and in Him I have as comfortable a life, as a mans Heart can desire: That's his meaning by this same *τὸ ζῆν*, that is, in Christ; because I am Employed in the Service of Jesus Christ: And I bless God that Christ hath Honour by me, that I do the Work of Christ, and so, *To me to live is Christ*: That's the Fourth thing.

Fifthly, *To me to live is Christ*, that is, Christ is the end of my Life: So you have the Five particulars. 1. I am by Christ freed from a Legal Death, being Dead by the Law. 2. Christ is the Principle of my Spiritual Life: 3. The Preserver of it. 4. The Comfort and Contentment of my Life. 5. The end of my Life: *Thus to me to live is Christ*. But because these two last are the two chief that I verily believe are intended here by the Apostle, I will a little open them more than the former. Now to shew how Christ is the Comfort and Contentment of a Christians Life, that I'll shew unto you in several particulars: Though he hath not Comfort as others have, though he hath not such a Table, and such Comings in as others have, yet he hath a life more comfortable than others.

As First, The very Contemplation of Jesus Christ, it is incomparably Sweet and Comfortable to a Gracious heart. For what doth a Godly man see in Christ? In Christ I see the Brightness of the Glory of the Father, I see the Character of the Ingraven Image of God the Fa-

ther

ther in Him: When I look upon the World it's comfortable, it's comfortable to the Eye to behold the Light: But there I see but the Foot-steps of God, but in Christ I see the Face of God; the Face of the Living and Eternal First-Being of all things: That I behold in Him, and this is *Life* to me. *It's Eternal Life to know thee, O Lord, and thy Son, whom thou hast sent into the World.*

2. O the sweet Influences of the Grace of God that I feel, out of His Fulness do I receive, and Grace for Grace; I have the flowings of the Water of Life into my Soul daily, and therefore Christ is to live to me.

3. I have the Love of God shed abroad into my Soul. O the Beams of the Love of the Eternal God, that are shed abroad in my Soul by Christ, and those Beams of Gods Love, they are Life to me.

4. In Him I have an Interest in all the Treasures of the Riches of the Grace of the Infinite God, they are all mine, they are all made over to me in Jesus Christ.

5. And then fifthly, In Him I have blessed Rest and Satisfaction to my Soul for my Eternal Estate; I am sold for Eternity in Him.

6. And then in Him I have the Joy of the Holy Ghost shed abroad into my Heart, and it is the comfort of my Soul to see Him Honoured any way, more than to enjoy any good to my self.

7. In Him, O the Communion that I have with Him, is more than Life; those lettings out of my Heart to Him, and those lettings out of His Heart again to my Soul: What is it? It's more than a Thousand Lives unto me.

8. In Him I have the Conveyance of all the Good that God the Father Conveys to the Hearts of His Saints, in order to Eternal Life; and therefore, O the Comfort

and

and Contentment my Soul hath thereupon.

And then, He is the end of my Life: To what purpose do I live, if it were not in order to Him? For He is the first that God did aim at in all his Works, *Ab extra*, and therefore Christ is called the *First-begotten* of all: He was the first in Gods Intention, yea, the Scripture saith in *Ephes. 3. 19. All things are by Him, and for Him.* Now if Christ be the End of all the Works of God the Father, God in all that ever He aim'd at in His Councils from Eternity, He did aim at the setting up of the Honour of Christ, and at His own Honour in Him and by Him: Therefore surely, He is my Life, He is that I aim at, He is the End of my Life.

And all the Glory that God the Father hath from all His Creatures, it is through Him, *Ephes. 3. 21.* Then while I live to Him, I serve the greatest Designs that God the Father hath: I am useful unto God in the greatest Designs that ever He had from Eternity, or ever shall have; and therefore for me to live is Christ. Thus you have the opening of what the Apostle saith. Now then by way of Application for this,

*Appl.* In the first place, Learn to Examine your Hearts from this, what your Life is: Examine in this thing, what is your Life? Whether you can say as the Apostle here did, *To me to live is Christ?* What do you account your Lives to be? It would be a very near Point, if God would but help you to understand it, and seriously to weigh it. I say, What do you account your Lives to consist in? Why some Men think, O for me to live, it's to get an Estate, that's my Life. Another thinks, to me to live, why it is, to have Company, to be Merry, to Eat and Drink, that is Life to me. Another, to live, why it's to be great in the World, to be accounted some Body,

to get Honour, to get Places: The Lives of Men consist in such things as these are, Most Men account it to be their Lives, to enjoy the Contentments of the World; so be it they can have so much coming in as they may please the Flesh, and satisfy the Lusts of the Flesh; there's a brave Life. Who do you account to be the Men that live the brave Lives in the World? O that you would Answer as in the Presence of God now: Whether do you account the Men that have all the Contentives to the Flesh, that possibly may be, as Honour, Repute, and Esteem, and live at Ease, and can Ride up and down, and have Attendance about them, and brave in their Clothes, to live the brave Lives? Or whether those Men that are serviceable to the Great Ends of God, in setting forth the Honour of Jesus Christ? Which are the Men that God accounts most Happy? Would you account a Man that were very Mean and Low in the World, and Despised by the World, yet if he be Serviceable to Christ in the World, and enjoy Christ himself in the World, to be a more Happy man in this Life? Not only that he should be a more Happy man in the Life to come, but in this Life, then he that lives the bravest Life, in all the Jollity and Contentment here in this World? Certainly, the disposition of your Hearts in this thing, doth much discover what they are in reference unto God. That's the First.

Secondly, Here see what the Excellency of a Christian is: O the Excellency of a Saint in God! Why? Because he lives such a Life as he doth; he lives a Supernatural Life, he lives a Divine Life, he lives an Eternal Life: The Lives of the Saints are such as depend not upon any thing in the World. Let the World go which way it will, yet they have a Life, and a Livelihood too: They have where-



whereupon to live. How do Men account this to be a great Happines, Let there be as hard Times as can be, I hope I have enough to live on, saith a Man. If there should come Famine, or Troubles, yet I have a Livelihood, I have enough to live on. The Saints they have enough to Live on, come what Times will; for to them to live is Christ: You know Christ saith in the Gospell, *That his Flesh is Meat indeed, and his Blood is Drink indeed; and he that Eats his Flesh, and Drinks his Blood, hath Eternal Life.* That is, he that lives upon Him by Faith, and draws forth the Virtue that is in Him by Faith, he lives. It doth not beseem therefore Christians, to be Whining and Complaining in the World, while they want some outward contentment, for their present Bodily lives: For, *Your lives consists not in abundance.* Though it's true, God for a while doth preserve mens Natural lives by the Creature: I, but it's but a Natural life, it's not the *we'v*, that's but a by thing. But the thing that is *to live*, that's in Christ; and depends wholly upon Him: It should be therefore indifferent to a Godly Man or Woman, how things be with them in respect of this present life: For, *To them to live is Christ.* Surely, it's the most Noble and Glorious life that can be, when Christ is the Principle of it. Sometimes some have thought that possibly there may be other Worlds than we have here, and other kind of Creatures than them we have here; and some Mens thoughts will be Roving: Why cannot the Infinite Power of God make Thoulands of Worlds besides this, only they are not Revealed to us? And perhaps in those Worlds, the meanest Creature there may be as far above the Sun, as the Sun is here above a piece of Dirt. But suppose there were never so many Worlds, and such glorious

Crea-

Creatures that God had made: If God should say, Well, I by Mine Infinite Power have made this World, and I will make a Thousand Worlds more, and I will make every Creature in those to be so high in Glory above the Sun that you have now, as the Sun is beyond a piece of Dirt; yet in those Worlds there would be no Creature could live a more Glorious life than the Saints do: It's true, in Heaven, for the Degree it's more Glorious, but for the Kind of that Life, none of those Creatures could live a Higher, and a more Noble life than a Christian: Why, *For to him to live is Christ.* It's Christ that is his Life: And if God would make never such excellent things, he could not make any thing more Excellent than Christ is: Therefore so long as Christ is the Life of a Christian, it's the most Noble and Excellent thing of all that is or was or shall be.

Thirdly, Then, O let Christ be as dear to us as our Lives! Let His Honour be maintained by us as our Lives! Let us work for Him as we see a Man work for his life: Whatever we do for Christ, let us do it for Him as for our life, with all our strength: For, for us to live (if we be Christians) it is Christ. It's Christ that is the Element of Life, and therefore whither should our lives work but only unto Him, and for Him. That's the most blessed life that hath Christ most in it: We should not account that we do live, but when we do something for Christ. I remember it's said of the Emperor *Thur*, he would say, when he had not done some good to some of his Subjects: *I have not Reign'd to day.* Why? Because he had done no Body any good Turn. And so we should even say, *We have not liv'd to day,* except that we have done something for Christ. For, *For us to live is Christ.* And if to us to live be Christ here, O what will it be in Heaven.

hah

Q

ven

ven then! For it is but a very little of Christ that we do enjoy here.

That's the next Use. When Christ who is our Life, shall come to be Revealed, when we shall come to enjoy the Fulness of all the Good that there is in Christ, what will Christ be then unto us?

And lastly, From hence we may see the Reason why the Saints can deny themselves so much in their outward condition, in that that the Men of the World make account their Lives consist in, as their Estates, and Credit, and Liberty, and Esteem: The People of God, they can deny themselves in such things as these are. They can Die daily unto the World: Why? Because they have another Life. Indeed, a Man that hath no other life but that that consists in Abundance, in his Estate, Pleasures, Liberties and Delights, he knows not how to deny himself in them; but now a Man that hath another Life beyond this, he can deny himself in these things: 2 Cor. 12. 11. See what the Apostle saith there concerning himself, *For we,* saith he, *who live, are alwayes delivered unto Death for Jesus sake, that the Life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our Mortal Flesh:* Even this Mortal Flesh that must Die ere long, in suffering for Christ here, it doth manifest the Life of Christ. And is it not a greater good to us, to have our Mortal Flesh to manifest the Life of Christ, than to have our Mortal Flesh to live here a Natural life? We would be loath to have this flesh of our Bodies to be dead flesh: While we are willing to suffer for Christ, this flesh of ours doth manifest the very Life of Jesus Christ: Therefore the Saints are dead to the World, but they are alive to Jesus Christ. But thus much for this first Part. *To see to live to Christ.*

*And to die is Gain.*

To whom Christ is to live, to them Death is gain. The more we enjoy Christ, and live to Christ here, the more gainful will death be to us, and the more shall we be able to look upon death as Gain. And here we have a Scripture (if we had no other) sufficient to prove the Immortality of the Soul: How could death be Gain unto the Apostle, if so be that the Soul should die together with the Body? Indeed, Christ would be Gain for another Life hereafter, that is, at the Day of Judgment, there Christ would be Gain. And those that do deny the Immortality of the Soul, yet they are not so vile as some take them: To think that Man should Die like a Beast, and there's an end of him; and that there shall be no Resurrection. No: But those that do deny the Immortality of the Soul, they say, That though the Soul dies with the Body, yet at the Day of Judgment, both Soul and Body shall rise again and live for ever. But all they deny, is this, That the Soul between Death and the Day of Judgment, shall live: They think, that the Soul between Death and the Day of Judgment, shall die, and then by the Almighty Power of God, they shall be both raised again: That's their Opinion. But, though it be not so bad as some would make it, yet an Opinion false. For this Text shews that Paul was in a straight, he knew not whether to live or die; but that was the conclusion, that it was better for him to die; for then he should be with Christ. He could not mean that when he was dead, he should be with Christ when the general Resurrection comes: but he must needs mean that he should be with Christ immediately after his death, and en-

joy another manner of communion with Jesus Christ, than he did here while he was living. And it is upon this account, that he saith, *It is gain for him to die.* Why Paul enjoyed much communion with Jesus Christ here; and though he had some sin in him, yet considering the Grace he had, and the Service he did for Christ, certainly it were better for him to live, than to be in a condition where he should enjoy nothing of Christ, and do no Service for Christ. But the Apostle lookt upon the State of death before the day of Judgment, to be a better Estate than that he had while he lived. Though, saith he, I have the Grace of Christ, and I do Service for Him, yet there is a better condition between Death and Judgment: If my Soul were gone from my Body, it would be in a better Estate than now it is: *To me to die is gain;* and so you have it in 2 Cor. where the Apostle speaks of his departing out of the Body, in Chap. 5. *Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at Home in the Body, we are absent from the Lord. We are confident,* in verse 8. *I say, and willing rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord.* So that 'tis apparent, that upon the Souls absence from the Body, it is present with the Lord. Now if the Soul did die as the Body doth, it were not present with the Lord; no, not so much as when it is in the Body. But now the Apostle saith, That when it is out of the Body, then it is present with the Lord; and when it is in the Body, it is absent from the Lord. And so it is upon this Ground, especially that the Apostle saith, *That to him to die was Gain:* Because he should be absent from the Body, but present with Christ, which is best of all. To be with Christ, it is more than to have Christ with us. The difference lies here: For unto be with Christ, is it for



set us to be beeholders Christ, where He is taken into  
 in all His Glory and Excellency; and for to enjoy that  
 is a proportionable joy. But how? Christ to be *manu-  
 ments* *God with us*, is for Christ to bow down as  
 it were to us; and to manifest so much of Himself as is  
 suitable to our condition. Therefore Christ to enjoy  
 Himself to come to the with us of *Faith* *He is with us*  
 Man's Sorrows; He is with us suitable to our *low* and  
 low condition; but when we come to be with Him we  
 are then suitable to His High and Glorious condition.  
 There lies the difference. in Mark. The Apostle doth not  
 here say, *To me to die is Gain*. Upon this Ground I be-  
 cause I shall be delivered from my Troubles, &c. & great  
 many are ready to think, it were well for me to be Dead.  
 If they be but a little discontented, their outward Trou-  
 ble, makes them willing to go out of this World. Yea,  
 and if their Bodies be weakly, and their Stomachs gone,  
 and cannot Eat as others do, or Sleep as others do, or  
 are very Poor, and Live in a mean Condition, they are  
 weary of this World. Now to think death Gain upon  
 such a poor Ground as these, is not according to the Spi-  
 rit of *Paul*. *Paul* suffered as much as many of us do  
 for outward things in this World, yea, yet he did not  
 desire to die. Other, I shall be Afflicted no more, be  
 Persecuted no more in the World; yea, but when I die I  
 shall be with Jesus Christ, and shall enjoy Communion  
 with Him; and it is this that makes me look upon Death  
 with comfort, and in this respect it is a Gain. Though *Paul*  
 had enjoyed all the World at will, yet he would have  
 accounted Death to have been Gain to him. And  
 though *Paul* was a Man of great Esteem among the Saints,  
 (though Persecuted by others) yet death was a Gain to  
 him. Yea, though *Paul* enjoyed all Ordinances, yet  
 Christ

Christ was Gain'd himself. And though he did a great deal of Service for Christ, (as I verily believe there was never any Man since the World was made, did more Service for Jesus Christ than *that* did) and yet death was Gain to him; he should get much by it; Why many things might make the death of *Paul* Gainful. I remember the last time I spake to you, I spoke about an Argument of the Victory over Death, that we have by Christ; I will not speak now of what then I spake to, but merely Confine my self; for otherwise the Argument might be very large, to shew the Gain of death to Believers. But I'll confine my self to the very thing that the Apostle speaks of here in this *Chapter*, That he should be present with Christ.

Therefore now I'll speak of the Gain of being with Christ. Now I confess there are many things that might be opened. The Communion of the Soul departed with Jesus Christ,

As First, It shall be immediate, the Souls of the Saints while they are in the Body, they have Communion with Christ; but it is Mediate, by other things, by Ordinances and Means, whereby Christ conveys Himself to them; but there they shall have Communion with Christ Immediately, only Christ and the Soul together. Now the more Immediate the Communion is with Christ, it is the more pure: Here we have some Communion with Christ, but a great deal of Sin mixt together with it. That that is immediately from the Fountain is more pure, than that comes in the Streams hath Dirt mixed with it. So that that we shall have with Christ immediately shall be pure, we shall have Communion with Him and nothing else: We shall have no mixture at all of any evil in our own Spirits.

And

And

And then Secondly, Immediate communion with Christ, it is more Sweet: As the more Pure, so the more Sweet. As now, the Wine that comes immediately from the Grape, it hath more Spirits, and is more delightful than that that is poured from Vessel to Vessel. That which we have here from Christ, it is that that is poured from Vessel to Vessel; but that which Souls departed have from Christ is immediate, and so comes more Sweet. As if the Child suck Milk from the Breast, it is more sweet to the Child than the Milk in a Spoon. That that we have from Christ here, is Milk as it were from the Spoon; but that that Souls have that are departed, they suck from Christ immediately, and so comes to be more sweet.

Thirdly, And more especially, we account that that comes immediately, to have more Love in it. As that that a Friend gives by his own hand, is better and more comfortable to us. So that that comes from God immediately, it's a great deal more sweet. As now here while we Live in the World, the more immediate a Mercy is, the more sweet it is to a gracious Heart. Indeed, a Mercy that comes by second Causes, is comfortable, because God Over-rules all the Causes; but when it can see God immediately in a Mercy, the more immediate the Hand of God is here. Though God doth not work so immediately here as He will do afterwards; but the more immediate God is here, the more sweet it is. And therefore in a Judgment, the more immediate the Hand of God is, the more Terrible; as in the Plague. So in a Mercy, though every Mercy is sweet, yet the more immediate God is in a Mercy, the more sweet it is. And then O how sweet is all the Good that the Saints have immediately from Christ; therefore it's Gain to them.

And

And then, fourthly, it is more strong. The first Re-  
bonds is more Powerful than a second; and the first  
Gushings out are more strong. The Beams of the Sun  
when they are first Reflected, than if you take a Glass  
and Reflect them again and again. And so that that  
comes Gushing out (as it were) of the very Heart of  
God, it is more strong a great deal; and there is greater  
Impressions upon the Heart by it, than that that comes  
by second Causes.

Fifthly, That that comes Immediate, it comes with-  
out Labour. The Soul draws it from Christ, and is not  
put to so much Pain and Labour as now we are put to.  
If we would have Communion with Jesus Christ, we  
must stir up our selves to the Humbling of our Hearts,  
to the Acting of our Faith, to Exercise our Graces,  
and put the Body to it. If you would have any com-  
munion with Christ in Prayer, it must put you to some  
Labour. And so in the Word and Sacraments. And the  
Labour of a Christian is very great. But when we come  
to have Immediate communion with Christ, it will be  
the Flowings in of Christ to the Soul without any La-  
bour at all.

Sixthly, It shall be more full, when we come to be Uni-  
ted to the very Fountain itself; there it shall be more  
full than the Stream. Certainly, there is that Good and  
Excellency in Christ, that is too much for any Creature  
in the World to convey in. Yea, take all the Creatures  
in the World, and Ordinances; they are too scant to  
be able to convey the Good that is in Christ; yea, that  
Good that Christ takes delight to communicate to the  
Souls of His People. And that is the Reason that here  
we have but a little glimpse of the Beauty and Consolation  
so Narrow and Small, that there can be but a little Re-  
bourn

out through those Conduits; but when the Soul is with Christ immediately, then it hath the Fulness of the Lettings out of Gods Mercy: There will be an Eminency of every sort of Good to every poor Christian. I remember *Jerom*, speaking of that Text, *Christ being All in all*: He makes this Interpretation of it, saith he, Christ is here but some to some; but not all to all. As for Instance, saith he, Here some Men have some Eminency of some particular Grace conveyed to them, and some other Eminency of some particular Grace. As *Moses* had an Eminency of Meekness, *Abraham* an Eminency of Faith, *Job* an Eminency of Patience, and *Solomon* an Eminency of Wisdom, but, saith he, Where was there ever a Man Eminent in all Graces? But then (saith he) *Christ shall be All in all*: That is, Christ shall convey all Grace to all His Saints, that all the Saints shall have an Eminency and Fulness in all Grace whatsoever. This will be an Excellent thing. Surely it's Gain then to Die, for a gracious Heart, where Christ shall be thus All in all to them, to convey this Fulness of Good in all things unto them. Those Saints that are the Meanest now, whose Souls have the least degree of true Grace, they shall have an Eminency of all Grace. Wouldst not thou think thy self happy, if thou hadst as much Faith as *Abraham*, as much Meekness as *Moses*, and as much Patience as *Job*, and as much Insight into the Mysteries of the Gospel as *Paul*? Now, hadst thou as much as all the Saints ever had, were not that Gain? Why now as soon as thy Soul is departed from the Body, thou shalt have an Eminency in all Graces, as much as all the Saints ever had, since the beginning of the World. Therefore surely, it's Gain to die for a Godly Man. *Further*, It's Gain in this respect, When they re-

and

R

ceive



ceive immediately, they shall receive all United in one, and all together: They shall have such Influence from Christ, as hath all Good united in one Beam of Excellency, and so receive it all together. As now, a Man may take the Quintessence of several Herbs; there's this Herb hath this Virtue, another another, and a third a third; but now if you Still all these Herbs together, you will have the Virtue and Quintessence of all in one Drop. So Christ here scatters His Excellencies, one in one Creature, another in another; but when we come to enjoy Him immediately, then we shall have all in one, because all His Excellencies whatsoever is united in one in Him.

Eighthly, Further, all our Good shall be in continual Act. Here we have a great deal of Good in the Habit, but now when we come to have this Immediate communion with Christ, there all our Graces shall be Acted continually. The Sun, you know, how it doth Act the Earth; whatsoever there is in the Earth, it draws it forth and makes it flourish. So the Presence of the Sun of Righteousness, Oh how Gloriously will it Act all our Graces! In *Numb. 17. 7.* We read of *Aarons Rod*, it Blossom'd: And the Text saith, *It Blossom'd before the Lord.* When the Souls of the Saints shall be before the Lord, and be in the Presence of the Lord Christ: O they shall Blossom and Flourish, and all their Graces shall Flourish in a most Glorious manner.

Ninthly, And then lastly, We shall enjoy what is in Christ without any Intermission: What's the reason of any Intermission here? But something that comes between Christ and our Souls. But now when there shall be nothing between Christ and the Soul, then there will be no Intermission. That Sweetness and Comfort thou hast

hast in communion with Christ at any time, thou shalt have it at all times: And how good is that? O saith many a Soul, could I have but the communion with Christ at all times, as I have at some times: O that would be comfortable! Now when the Soul hath Immediate communion with Christ, it shall have it at all times. What's the reason of Ecclesies? It is the Interposition between the Moon and the Sun, or some Interposition between the Sun and us. So our Ecclesies of the Light that we have from Christ, it is some Interposition: Take away the Interposition, and then there will be no Intermission. Now put all these together, and is it not Gain to Die, and to be with Christ. Now by way of Use:

*It is Gain thus to be with Christ.*

Hence then, If it be Gain for one that doth so much Service for Christ as *Paul* did, surely than those that are Believers, and are made little Use of in any Service for Christ, they will get by their Death. *Paul* was a Man that one would wonder how the Churches could spare him, he did so much for Christ; and yet *Paul* would get by Death. If thou beest a Believer, thou shalt have thy Immediate communion with Christ, as *Paul* had. Alas, here while thou livest, thou hast but little communion between Christ and thee; and doest Him but little Service in the World: Then why should you so much desire to Live in the World, that have nothing to Countervail the Trouble that you have, and the Sin that is committed in the World? O surely, it will be gain for you.

Secondly, Hence it follows, That it is a Self-denial to a Believer, to be willing to Live here in the World. You will say, If it be so much Gain, why should any be

Use.

so desirous to Live? It's this, first, Nature will have its work, though in their Judgments they are convinc'd, that it's better to be with Christ; yet the Body will be working, and the Affections will follow the Body very much. Further, Though they be convinc'd that it is Gain, yet God lays a Tie upon them, to preserve their Lives as long as they can here in this World, in Obedience to God: They do desire to avoid Dangers, and Preserve their Lives. It is not for them to be where it is best for them to be, but to be where God would have them to be; and therefore God doth charge them to seek to Preserve their Lives, and to go on till He Himself shall Dissolve the Body and Soul. It's God that is the Lord of our Life, and as God gave us our Lives, so it is He that must take them away, and not any Body else. But yet, I say, there is some Self-denial in it: We must look upon our selves here, as in a very Low and Mean condition, in comparison of what we hope to be within a while after. Therefore observe this one Note, Those that do believe the Gain of Death, they had need Labour what they can, to countervail the Forbearance of the Gain, by somewhat or other. If a Man hath a great Gain, and it comes not in his present Possession, he thinks, What shall I have for my Forbearance? You will say, What is it that any Believer can have in lieu of his Forbearance of that Gain? Truly, the most Excellent thing is this, that he may do Christ Service while he Lives. Now then, Is that the main thing? O learn from hence, to be of as much use in your Lives, as possibly you can, for you have nothing else (to speak of) in Forbearance of that great Gain. Why, Lord, I expect to enjoy Thee forever before long, but thou art pleas'd to Prolong my Life here for a while; in the mean time

I meet with many Temptations and Troubles, and Vexations, and much Sin I have. But yet, Lord, thou knowest it's my desire to Honour Thee, and Serve Thee; and through Thy Mercy, I am some way or other Serviceable to Thee, in the Place where Thou hast set me; and, Lord, this is the thing contents me, while I am absent from Thee.

Thirdly, Hence we see the great Difference that there is between the death of a Believer, and the death of a Wicked Man. I shewed you, I remember in the death of an Ungodly Man, when the fiery Serpent comes with his Sting, and takes him in his Natural Estate. Death is not Gain to such a one: O, no; death takes away all his Gain: But now, death is the greatest Gain to the Saints. That's an excellent Scripture you have in 1 Cor. 3. the latter end, *Whether Paul, or Appollos, or Cephas, or the World, or Life, or Death, or Things present, or Things to come, all is yours.* In Christ, Death comes to be made yours: Death is part of the Possession of the Saints: O the difference between the death of the Saints, and the death of Wicked and Ungodly Men! Do but put two Men, a Wicked Man, and a Godly Man, lying both together upon their Death-Bed, (you must take a wicked Man that hath an enlightened Conscience) he lies beholding the Wrath of the Infinite God, ready to swallow him up; and his Conscience hearing and sending of him, and so the black dismal bottomless Gull, ready to swallow him; see the fiery Serpent sett from an Angry God, twisting himself about his Middle, with a Sting at his Heart, ready to take away his Life; that he might not Live any longer to Dishonour his God; he lies cursing himself for his Wickedness and Folly, and the Company that he hath Liv'd in, and wishing that he had never

been

been Born. Now the Godly Man, he lies blessing of the Name of God for His Goodness; and in that, God did shew to him in the time of his Life, the things that concern his Eternal Peace: He blesses God that ever he knew Him, that ever he knew His Wayes: He blesses God that the time of his departure is so near, and he sees Jesus Christ ready to receive him, and the Angels attending about him: O the blessed day when I shall go to Enjoy an Immediate, Full, and Eternal Communion with Jesus Christ, that is best of all. And there he lies Encouraging all that comes to see him, to know Christ and God betimes. O here's the difference between the death of the Godly, and the death of the Wicked: One is the greatest Terror, and the other is the greatest Gain.

And, my Brethren, let these Things that I have now Spoken to you, let them prepare you for Death, and welcome Death whensoever it comes. Do not think of what you must Leave in the World, but what you are going to: It is to go to Christ, that is best of all. And manifest the Power of those Things, lay them up against such a time.

And let all that hath been said, Teach you to be Godly, to Prize Christ and the Gospel: Here's that will Recompence all Troubles and Afflictions you meet withal in the Wayes of God, to be able upon your Death-Bed, to say with Paul: *To me it is Gain.* It will Recompence whatever Pains you take in the Wayes of Religion.

And I appeal to you: Do you think that there was ever any since the World began, that was Sorry upon their Death-Bed, that they had taken too much Pain in the Wayes of God? There have been Thousands

that



that have Cursed themselves for the neglecting of the day of Grace and Salvation, but never sorry for taking so much Pains. O no! When thou comest upon thy *Death-Bed* thou wilt have need of all, and thou wilt bless God for any pains that thou hast taken for Christ. Lay then this Sentence unto thy Heart, it will Teach thee to Live, and to Die: And, Certainly, he must needs Live Joyfully whose *Life is Christ*: And he must needs Die comfortably, whose *Death is Gain*.

Luce. 10. 28.

And into what? How? He that is  
 of the Son of Man, shall be  
 Son of Man.

¶ The Sermon

And what? How? He that is  
 of the Son of Man, shall be  
 Son of Man.

And what? How? He that is  
 of the Son of Man, shall be  
 Son of Man.

# A Sermon.

Luke, 10. 5, 6.

*And into whatsoever House ye Enter, first say, Peace be to this House.*

*And if the Son of Peace be there, your Peace shall Rest upon it: If not, it shall turn to you again.*

**T**Hese Words are part of Christs Direction unto the Seventy Disciples, that He sent forth to Preach the Gospel. As *Exod. 15. last.* We Read of Twelve Wells of Water, and Threescore and Three Trees, where *Israel* Encamped after their coming through the *Red-Sea*, for their Refreshing. So Christ sends forth His Twelve Apostles, and Seventy Disciples, for the Refreshing of the World, with the glad Tidings of the Gospel.

There were Seventy. I find many Interpreters keep much ado about the Number, *Austin*, and *Jerom*, with others: They say, this Number hath Reference unto the Seventy several Languages of the World. For, they say, That at the Confusion of Languages at *Babel*, there were Seventy; and so according in Proportion unto them

them, Christ sends forth these Seventy. These are but Surmises, and many other such Guesles there are; but particular Reason for the Number, we have not Express in Scripture, neither have we their Names. We have the Apostles Names, the Twelve, but not these Seventy. Some God is Pleas'd to make Men of Names, Honourable in the World, and leave their Names as Honourable: Others the Lord Imloys in great Works and Services, but their Names are Buried. It is enough for these, that Christ tells them in the 20th. verse of this Chapter, *That their Names are Written in the Book of Life.* Let God Imploy us in His Work, and Write our Names in the Book of Life, it is no matter for to Name us in this World. There are many remarkable things in Christs sending out of these Seventy.

As First, He sends them forth by two, and two; so you have it in *ver. 1.* of the *Chap.* to the end that they might be a mutual Support, Comfort, Encouragement, Assistance one to another; which is the Duty of all Ministers, that God by His Providence shall Joyn together in any Service.

Secondly, Christ tells them, the great Work that they were sent about: *The Harvest truly is great,* saith He, *and the Labourers are but few.* I send you out into a Harvest, which is a great Labour, a useful Labour, a joyful Work, *Isa. 9. 3.* Joy in the time of Harvest, is the greatest Joy in the World: It is a Harvest that you are sent into, and it is a very great one, and therefore you have Encouragement because there is so much Work to do. In *Mat. 9.* latter end, There it is said that Christ look'd upon the Multitude with Compassion, and said, *The Harvest is great, but the Labourers but few.* When Ministers look upon great Congregations, Multitudes

of People, and especially such as come readily and willingly to hear the Word of God, he should not look upon them without compassion; as looking upon them as a great Harvest, as much Work to be done there. Yea, in *John 4. 34.* After the Woman of *Samarita* and others were Converted, as the first Fruits; Christ tells the Disciples of the Regions, that they were white unto Harvest: As if He should say, There are Multitudes here in this Place, that are very ready to Entertain the Gospel.

A great Encouragement indeed it is, when the Ministers of God shall see People so readily to attend upon the Word, as they shall look upon the Regions as white unto Harvest, that they are in a Preparation to receive the Word: *The Harvest is great, saith Christ, the Labourers are but few, pray ye therefore the Lord of the Harvest, that he will send forth Labourers into his Harvest.*

There were Threescore and Ten sent out together, and yet they were few, and they must Pray for more. It is the Duty of all People, especially of Ministers, to Pray to God, that He will send forth more Painful Labourers.

And then, Thirdly, Christ tells them what Difficulties they are like to meet withal in their Work; *Go your way, saith He, in ver. 3. Behold I send you forth as Lambs among Wolves; you are to be as I am, of Lamb-like Dispositions, Innocent among People where you Live. But know before-hand, lest you be Discouraged with those Difficulties you are like to meet withal; you shall not only meet with Dogs that will Bark at you, nor with Foxes that seek cunningly to Undermine you, but with Wolves that will seek violently to Destroy you.*

And

And you shall find it in *Mat. 10.* That He sends out His Apostles, and He tells them the like: And indeed, it did so fall out. For there was not any one of the Twelve Apostles, but did Die a Violent death; was put to death by the Rage of Ungodly Men, except *John*. It were easie to shew you partly out of Ecclesiastical Stories, how every one except *John*, was put to death, some Hanged, some Ston'd, some Crucified, and some by the Sword. One way or other, the Twelve were put to death, that were the greatest Instruments of doing God Service, that ever were in the World; and yet this Recompence they all had from this wicked World, save only one (*Paul*) and yet the Scripture tells us that he was Banish'd. And Ecclesiastical Stories tell us, that he was cast into Scalding Lead; but withal they tell us, that he was Delivered by a Miracle out of it: So that he wanted not his Sufferings too. That's the Third thing.

And then the Fourth thing that there is in Christs Direction unto these, it is this: He tells them, That all their Living that they are like to have, it is to be had by their Work: They are to be maintain'd for their Work, and they should take no further care, *For the Labourer is worthy of his Hire.*

But then, Fifthly, Which seems to be more strange, Christ doth bid them, *That they should salute no Man by the way.* Why would Christ have His Disciples to be Uncivil, not so much to Salute Men in a civil way? That surely, cannot be the meaning: But it was to signifie, that they were to tend the great Work that they were sent about, with all Diligence, and to take heed that nothing did Interrupt them. They were not to stay upon any Complemental Salutations, Visitations, that spends a great deal of Time oftentimes; they had not



so much Time as other Men. Men, indeed, who have little to do, they spend their day, as your great Gentry, and others, spend a great part of their Time in Complemental Salutations, and Visitations: *I but, saith our Saviour, do not you spend any time that way; Employ all your time in the Work you are sent about.* Men that have great Businesses to do, they can spare no time for Salutations: So saith Christ to his Disciples, *Your Errand is of great Consequence, you are to be Embassadors of Reconciliation between God and Man; be not hindred any wayes that usually Men are hindred in their Work.* And therefore People should not expect such things from Ministers, in any Complemental Visitation of that kind; but they are to know, that the Work of Ministers should take up their whole Heart and Time: This seems to have some Reference unto the Direction of the Prophet *Elisha* unto his Servant, when he was to go to Heal the *Shunamites* Son, which you have in *2 Kings 4. 29.* *Gird up thy Loyns saith the Prophet, and take my Staff in thine hand and go thy way: If thou meet any Man, salute him not; and if any Man salute thee, answer him not again.* That is, Go in haste to the Child, and let nothing hinder thee: So this is the meaning of this, *salute no Man by the way.* Not that they should be Uncivil, or Uncourteous, but that they should take heed that no such thing hinders them, and take up their time as usually doth other Mens.

And then having given them that Direction, now comes the Direction in my Text, that I have read unto you: *And into whatsoever House you enter, first say, Peace be to this House.* That is, do not force your selves upon any People, do not come in a forceable way into any House, but with their Leave; *And first say, Peace be to*

this

*this House.* This was the ordinary Salutation of the Hebrews, *Peace be to you : Peace be to this place.* For they comprehended all Good by the name of Peace. Now, though the Disciples were not to Salute any by the way, yet those they came to Preach to, they were to Salute them with this Salutation, *Peace be to this House :* Which was but to shew unto them the Gentleness, and the Lovingness of their Spirits ; they were to make this appear to People that they were sent to Preach unto, that they were Men of Soft, Loving, Sweet, Gentle Spirits, therefore they come with this Salutation, *Peace be to this House.*

*Secondly,* This is not only a Salutation, but as *Christostom*, it was a Benediction. They in the Name of God, were to Bless the place where they came, and say, *Peace be to this place,* as a Benediction.

*Thirdly,* It was to give them a Taste of the great Errand they come to the House for, it was to tell them of the Message, that they came from Christ unto them about, and that was, to bring Peace unto them.

Secondly, Here's a Description of the Entertainers of this Peace, *If the Son of Peace be there :* The Son of Peace, that is,

If there be any, First, that are ordained by God, to have the Benefit of this Peace that you bring to them, then let your Peace abide. So the Scripture uses this phrase, *son of a thing*, to shew one appointed to it : As, *The Son of Perdition* ; so, *The Son of Peace* : That is, one appointed by God, to enjoy the Benefit of this Peace.

Secondly, *The Son of Peace* : That is, One that will attend unto Peace, will manifest himself to be a Child of Peace indeed, by attending diligently upon the Ministry

nistry of Peace that you do bring unto him. And to you have it, as I remember, in *Matth. 9. 15.* where the Apostle speaks of the *Child of the Bride-Chamber*: Now the words in the *Greek* are, *The Sons of the Bride-Chamber*: That is, those that do attend upon the Business of the Bride-Chamber. So the Sons of Peace, that is, those that are willing to attend upon this great Doctrine of Peace, that is to be delivered to them.

And then Thirdly, *The Sons of Peace*: That is, such as will be Obedient unto the Peace of the Gospel. So in *Ephes. 2. 2.* As those that will not Obey, are called the Children of Disobedience: So those that Obey, may be called the Sons, or the Children of Peace. So then, the meaning is this, If a Son of Peace be there, that is, If one appointed to Eternal peace; if one that will attend upon your Gospel of Peace; if one that will be Obedient unto those Conditions of Peace that you are to bring: if such a one be there,

Then, *Let your Peace abide upon him.*

There's the Blessing of those that are thus the Sons of Peace, they shall have all the Good that there is in that blessed Peace of the Gospel that you bring; they shall not only have the Benefit of it for the present, but they shall have it *abide* upon them: They shall be exceeding Gainers, *Your Peace shall abide upon them.*

But, *If not*: If there be any that are not appointed to it, or that attend not upon it, that are not Obedient unto it, *Then your Peace shall turn to you again.* What's that?

That is, First, This is by way of Encouragement unto the Disciples. And, Secondly, By way of Threatning unto those that shall reject the Offers of the Gospel.

First, To

First, To the Disciples, Two ways.

First, Though their Ministry should not do good to Souls, yet they should not be Losers, but the Blessing of that Peace shall return into their own Bosoms. Look what Good they endeavoured to do to the People they Preached unto, if they did not receive it, then this Good should return upon their own Hearts, they should get by it themselves.

Secondly, Which I think to be as much intended as the former, and that's this: Your Ministry, the Ministry of your Peace: For so this Peace is, *It shall return to you*. That is, It shall be of as much Vigour, Strength, Power, and Efficacy to be carried to others, as it was at the first. They may think thus, If we do go and Preach to a People and shall be Rejected, then our Ministry is like to be vile: For if one shall Reject us, it's like another will. It is so indeed, in matters of the World; if a worldly Business receive any Foil in one, it's more like to receive a Foil in another. But, faith Christ, be not you troubled about this; but if you should Preach to any People where you should have any to Reject your Ministry, it should return to you again; it shall have as much Efficacy and Power, as if it never had been rejected when you go to carry it to another People. Whatsoever Disrespect is cast upon the Ministers, or upon their Ministry, yet as the Apostle saith, *The Word of God, is not bound*, Though we are bound, though the Ministry prevails not in one People, yet it retains the power of it, as much as if it had never been Rejected.

And as for those that do Reject it, let them know:

First, That they shall have no Blessing of that Peace.

Secondly, Let them know that it shall not continue long

long among them: No, not in the Ministry of it, but that God will deal very quick with them; for if they will not receive it, it shall return to you again. And thus you have both the Scope, and the Dependence, and the meaning of these words read unto you. Now then, there are many Observations of Excellent Note unto us.

As from Ver. 5. *Into whatsoever House ye enter, first say, Peace be to this House.*

*Observ.* 1. First, That the Ministers of the Gospel ought to be Men of Gentle, and Fair, Loving Dispositions, First say, *Peace be to this House.*

*Observ.* 2. That Ministers of the Gospel, ought to Bless the People among whom they come, say, *Peace be to them.*

*Observ.* 3. The great Errand and Business a Minister comes about to a People, it is to bring *Peace to them.*

*Observ.* 4. That a Minister hath Warrant and Commission to offer peace to any place wheresoever he comes, let them be what they will be; he hath a Commission from Christ, to offer peace to them.

*Observ.* 5. That the first thing a Minister is to do in his Preaching, it is to offer *Peace*; first say, *Peace* before any thing else. And these are the Five Notes of Observation from Ver. 5.

Now then from Ver. 6. *And if the Son of Peace be there.* From hence there's this:

*Observ.* 1. First, Note, That when God sends the Ministers of the Gospel unto a place, it is very probable that there are some appointed for the good of it; that there will be some *Sons of Peace* there.

*Observ.* 2. That those that do entertain the Gospel, they are *(The) Sons of Peace*

*Observ.*



*Obser. 3.* Whosoever are *Sons of Peace*, shall certainly have all the Blessing of the *Peace* of the Gospel to rest upon them.

*Obser. 4.* Yet sometimes where God sends the Ministry of the Word, it is rejected: *If not*, and Gods Ministers must expect it.

*Obser. 5.* Wheresoever it is Rejected, those certainly are Deprived of the Benefit of the Gospel: *If not, it shall return to you again.*

*Obser. 6.* That those that are Faithful Ministers, shall not lose their Labour, though they should not Convert Souls to God, *It shall return.*

*Obser. 7.* And then lastly, Those that shall reject the Gospel, are not like to enjoy it long; God will deal with them very quick: *If not, your Peace shall return to you again, and there's an end of them*; saith God. These are the several Notes of Observation, out of this Direction of Christ to the Disciples for their Preaching.

*And into whatsoever House ye enter, first say, Peace be to that House.*

First, You see how Ministers of the Gospel should come to a place, with gentleness, and chearfulness, and manifest a sweetness of Spirit, in coming to any place; and so to gaine upon people that way. In *Lev. 24. 2.* *The Lamps in the Temple were to be of pure Oyle Olive*, beaten, to note that the Lights that God sets up in his Church should be of peaceable and gentle Spirits, of sweet Spirits; You know that the *Olive* it is the emblem of peace and sweetness. So in *Rev. 12. 4.* The Two Witnesses there, which especially are the Ministers of the Gospel; they are said to be the Two *Olive*

T

*Branches*

*Branches.* Those who Christ sends, especially to witness to himself and unto his Truth, they are to be *olive Branches*, Men of peaceable, and gentle, and loving disposition. So we find that the Apostle St. Paul saith concerning himself, *1 Thes. 2. 7. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children.* So in *2 Tim. 2. 24. The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give a general repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.*

And this must be first, Because that God in whose Name they come, is the God of Peace.

Secondly, Christ whose Embassadors they are, is the Prince of Peace. And,

Thirdly, The Spirit of God, by whose assistance they Preach, is set out by the Dove, that they say hath no Gall; it was wont to be said of *Beza*, that he was a man without any Gall.

And the Gospel that is their Message, that's a Gospel of Peace, and the end that they are to aime at in their Ministry it is to bring peace to mens Souls. And besides, sometimes there is a necessity for Ministers to preach things that are hard unto people; things that they think to be very hard and grievous unto them; though their main scope be the Gospel of Peace; yet there are many things that belong to their Commission that seem to be very hard to people, As the opening of their lost and miserable condition by Nature, and the like, and to threaten sometimes in the Name of God: Now therefore, That they might convince people that they aim onely at good unto them in this; therefore they must be of as loving, and gentle, and quiet, and patient

patient Spirits as possible may be, especially in their own cause, and that's the tryal. You sometimes perhaps hear a Minister preach hard things, and you think they come with much harshness to you, and your hearts are ready to rise against them : But examine whether in all their dealings else, and in things concerning themselves, whether they be not of loving and gentle Spirits, and full of Bowels of Compassion. And they must be of such dispositions, that they might win upon people and draw their hearts, as in *Hos. 11. 4. I drew them with Cords of a Man, and with the Bands of love.* And indeed this is one special reason why God sends Men to be the Ministers of the Gospel rather than Angels, that there might not be any terror strook into the hearts of people. If Angels should appear they would be exceeding dreadful and terrible ; but God doth rather choose Man to be a Minister, that so he might sute himself to the dispositions of Men, and draw with the Cords of Man : And what's that ? That's with the Bands of love. Mans Nature will rather be drawn then driven.

And my Brethren, As it ought to be in Ministers to be of such dispositions, so you that are the people should shew your selves to be of the like dispositions towards them again ; of Sweet, and Loving, and Gentle, and Fair Dispositions towards them ; not of rugged and ridged tempers. We read of the building of the Temple, that there was not one whit of Iron us'd in it ; which is observable. We do not read ( I say ) of Iron that was brought to the Building ; they made their Pinns of Wood and other things, and Plates of Gold and Silver, but brought no Iron. God when he is about to build a Church, and call a People home to himself,

T 2

self; he will call such as are of gentle Spirits, or make them such. God doth either refuse such ridged Spirits, or else he doth change their natures: that's the First Note. *Say, Peace be to this House.*

*Doct. 2.* The Second is this, That Ministers ought to bless their People; for so these words are to be considered not onely as to manifest their dispositions, to give them a taste of their Spirits; but as a Benediction to them. Peace be to this place. We in the Name of the Lord Bless you with Peace. And this is more than to pray for them; Ministers are to pray for People; *God forbid, saith samuel, That I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you:* But Ministers should do more, They are in the Name of the Lord to Bless them. Prayer it is a Speaking unto God; but Blessing, it is to Speak from God to Man, and that with some kind of Authority. Therefore we find in Scripture, that *The Lesser is Blessed of the Greater.* And That the Ministers were appointed to Bless the People, in the Old Law, *Numb. 6. 23. speak unto Aaron, and to his Sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the Children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make His Face to shine upon thee, and be Gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His Countenance upon thee, and give thee Peace.* Here was Blessing in the Old Law. And they retain'd some part of it, in coming to any place, when they said, *Peace be to this Place.* We read of Men of great Esteem among the People of the Jews, that were wont to Bless those that they came unto: As you find that of Boaz, in *Ruth 2. 4. He Prays for them, and they Bless him.* Here was a sweet Salutation of a Man, that did set other Men on work: *Boaz came into the Field, and said unto the Keepers, The Lord be with*

with you: And they answered him, *The Lord bless thee.* Many Men when they go among their Work-men, they go with Raging and Curling, if things be not done according to their Mind. Now what an unseemly thing is this, among those who profess themselves Christians? But on the other side, this is Gracious-like, to come among their Servants and Work-men, and thus to Bless them, *The Lord be with you: And they to pray for them, And the Lord bless thee.* And so we read of pure Parent to Bless their Children. And it hath been the Use of the Church, to Bless the People. Therefore in all Congregations where you meet with the Exercises of Religion, you use to have a Blessing before you go; and you are not to flight it: And except God call you out by extraordinary Occasion, you are to abide and stay the Blessing. We read of some that were appointed by God to stand upon Mount *Gerisim*, in *Deut. 27.* and their work was only to bless, to Bless the People; and there were some who stood upon Mount *Ebal*, and they were to Curse. But now, Mark, If we search who they are that are appointed to Bless, you shall find them to be more Honourable, than those that were appointed to Curse: For those that were appointed to Curse, there was *Reuben*, he had lost his Birth-right, and *Gad*, and *Ashur*, and *Dan*, and *Naphtali*, they were Children of the Hand-Maid; they were not begotten in the way of Marriage, but only by the Hand-Maid, or by a Concubine: Most of these that were to stand upon Mount *Ebal* for Cursing, they were of the meaner sort of the Tribes. This notes thus much, That Blessing is the chief work that Ministers should Rejoyce and Delight in. Therefore though they do sometimes pronounce the Threats of God against you, to awaken Secure, Drowsie Sinners, which is their work



work likewise; yet certainly, there is nothing more suitable unto the Heart of a Godly Minister, than to be alwayes Blessing of his People, and to be bringing of the Message of Blessing unto them: And if this be so, then certainly, the Ministers of the Gospel, they are a great Blessing in the World. And you that are People, you should Encourage your Ministers to Bless you, and to Bless God for you; your Carriage towards them should be such, as they may with Chearfulness in the Name of God, Bless you; and they may in secret, when they are between God and themselves, Bless God for you. O when as the Minister shall first look upon the People, and Bless them in the Name of God, and Bless God for them; and the People shall look again upon the Minister, and pray to God for a Blessing upon him, and Bless God that ever they knew him: I say, happy is the Minister that thus Blesses, and Blesses God for a People; and happy likewise the People, that do thus pray for a Blessing upon, and Bless God for a Minister. But more Blessed is that God, that shall joyn such Ministers and People together: And that's the Second Note. That Ministers are to bless People when they come among them.

*Doct. 3*

But, Thirdly, Ministers are to bring the Message of Peace to a People. The great Errand that a Minister of the Gospel comes about, it is to bring Peace; it is to be a Messenger of Peace unto you; And indeed, the Ministry of the Gospel, doth many times bring outward Peace unto a People. When was there ever a Kingdom upon the Face of the Earth, that hath had longer continuance of outward Peace, than *England* hath had? And the Reason why our outward Peace is taken from the Kingdom for the present, it is because the Ministry of  
the

the Gospel hath been Rejected; and the Sword comes to Avenge the Covenant of the Lord; it comes to Avenge the Rejection of the Gospel of Peace; and if we reject the Gospel of peace, God saith, we shall not have outward peace for our *State*: If we will not imbrace peace for our Souls, we shall not have outward peace for our Bodies. But though the Ministry of the Word bring you outward peace many times, yet the main thing it is to bring is Spiritual peace, *Peace be to you*. As if the Apostles should say, We are come unto you from the Great God of gods, to be the Embassadors of peace for your Souls, to Preach unto you the Doctrine of Peace between God and you: This is the great Errand that we come about; *Peace be to you*. And saith the Apostle, To us is committed the Word of Reconciliation: That's the great thing that is committed to Ministers to Preach to a People, the Word of Peace. The Work that they are sent about, it is to Treat between God and man, upon Terms of peace: It is, I say, to Treat with your Souls for peace, that you might come to have peace with God, that a Blessed peace might be made between God and you: This is the great Errand that they come about, and whatsoever they Preach to you else, if it be to shew you what your miserable Condition is; yet it is in order to this still, To bring peace to your Souls. And indeed, all Faithful Ministers are careful of this, to shew at the very first, what their Scope is; it is to bring them to Life and Salvation: (But that in the next point:) But this certainly ought to be their Scope, whatsoever is Preached, it must Aim at the great Treaty between God and their Souls for Reconciliation. Our Scope, when we come to Preach unto you, it is not so much to Civilise you to en-veigh against Notorious crying Sins, Drunkards, and Whore-

Whore-Masters, and Thieves, and Blasphemers; though according as we meet with these things in the Road, we are to speak against them. But suppose we should cry out against these sins, this were good, and we had cause to bless God for it: I, but we had not done our Work, the great Work that we are to do, it is to Treat with your Souls about peace with God; to shew you how the Enmity that is between your Souls and God naturally, is to be taken away; that so there may be a blessed Reconciliation between God and you. This is the great Errand of the Ministers of the Gospel, unto a People; and if this be the Errand of it, Then, what an Honourable Work is this to let Man about? And the truth is, it is in some regard a more Honourable Work, than ever Angels were sent about: God doth not send the Angels about this Work, to Treat with Mankind about Terms of Peace with God. They are made Ministring Spirits, for the good of Gods Elect, and are made by God to be Executioners against Wicked men: But we never Read that God hath committed the Word of Reconciliation to Angels, God hath not appointed them to be the Preachers of Peace to People; therefore it is the most Honourable Work that ever Creature was set about, to come to a place, and say, *Peace be to this place, in the Name of God.*

And being it is such a Work as this, O how Detestable and Vile, and Cursed, is Laziness or Idleness, in any one that should profess himself a Minister of the Gospel! What? Come about such a Work as this, to be an Ambassador of Reconciliation from the Great God of Heaven and Earth? O, he should have his Heart and Thoughts taken up about this! Night and Day he should be Studying how he should Manage this great Work, that God sends him about to poor People.

And

And, O how acceptable should the Ministry of the Gospel be unto you: You need not fear any hurt it will do: It is but to Treat with your Souls about peace with God, there's all that is intended in this Ministry. Do not fear it, though things sometimes are spoken that you apprehend to be Terrible to you; yet all tend to this end, To bring peace unto you. Therefore as the Prophet, in *Isa. 52. 7.* saith, *How beautiful upon the Mountains are the Feet of him that bringeth good Tidings, that publisheth peace.* O his very Feet should be beautiful in your Eyes, This Scripture the Apostle doth quote, in *Rom. 10. 15.* *How shall they Preach except they be sent? As it is written: How beautiful are the Feet of them that Preach the Gospel of Peace: Here it is, That bring good Tidings.* So indeed, the great Work of the Gospel, it is nothing else but a good Message, good Tidings; and so our *English* word is to the same effect, good News, good Tidings. And certainly, did People but understand what the Scope of Christ were, to carry things about so in the wayes of His Providence, to bring Ministers of the Gospel to Preach peace to their Souls: It could not be, but they should open their very hearts unto them. We read of *Noah*, when he sent forth his Dove, after the Ark had been a long time upon the Waters, the Dove brings an Olive Branch to the Ark; and *Noah* puts forth his hand and takes in the Dove. The Ministers of the Gospel are as this Dove, and they come with an Olive Leaf in their Mouths; and they do not get it from the Wilderness, but they take it from Paradise; they bring it from the Scriptures, from those Blessed things of the Gospel that are revealed in the Word, and bring it to your Souls. Now therefore you should open your hearts, and take in the blessed Message of Peace and Reconciliation.

And then further, If so be that this be the great Work of the Ministers of the Gospel, what a vile World is this that can hardly bear with the Ministers, nor Ministry of the Gospel, but accounts them to be great Disturbers of the places where they Live? So they did to the Prophets and Apostles: *Elisba, Art not thou the troubler of Israel?* And so of *Paul, He was said to be a pestilent fellow.* The Apostles were said to turn the World upside-down. And so *Luther*, he was said to be the very Trumpet of Rebellion; so he was called by Ungodly men. It is not a New thing for the World to have such an Esteem of Ministers of the Gospel: And what do they do? It is only Preaching peace to the Souls of Men.

But, Lastly, If this be so, That the Errand is to bring Peace to your Souls: Then hence you Learn what you are to come for, when you come to hear Sermons; you hear that at such a time there is such a Sermon, or a new Man there is come among you, and you come to hear what he can say; or you hear that in such or such a place, there is a very witty Man, and of Excellent parts; and you come to hear what he can say: But alas, you deceive your own Souls all this while: You should come with a Disposition of Spirit, I am now going to hear the Doctrine of Peace between God and my Soul, to attend upon the Ministry of Reconciliation this day. And though the very word be not spoken of Peace, yet the Word, that doth tend to the making peace between God and my Soul. And indeed, when you feel the Ministry of the Gospel working of your Hearts into peace with God, then hath it had the true genuine proper Effect upon your Hearts, that God hath appointed it for. But if you only shall sit under the Ministry of the Word, and it may be only Gain some further knowledge in the



the things of Religion, that you never knew before, or be-  
inabled to Discourse of something in Divinity, more than  
you could before: What's this to the Fruit of the Ministry  
of the Gospel? No: But can you say, Blessed be God, the  
Lord hath made known to my Soul, what my Estate was  
by Nature: The Lord hath opened to me, the Doctrine  
of Reconciliation: The Lord hath shewn to my Soul, how  
I am to make peace with God, and that in another man-  
ner of way than ever I thought of: I come now to see it to  
be another manner of Mystery of Godliness, than ever  
I imagined before. Can you say so now? Hath the Gos-  
pel had this end of it upon your Hearts? O then, it hath  
had the Effect that the Lord doth send it for. And  
thus much for the Third Note of Observation, That the  
Work of Ministers is to bring Peace, the Message of  
Peace to People.

*Observ. 4.* The Fourth Point is this, That the Ministers  
of the Gospel are to offer Peace unto every one: For so  
you have it, *Into whatsoever House ye enter, say Peace  
beto it:* Offer terms of Peace to it. If you come to a  
place where there are the most Notorious sinners of all,  
yet offer peace to them: Though they be the most Pro-  
phane, and Ungodly people that should Live, yet offer  
peace to them: Though they be Old sinners that have  
Liv'd a long time in most vile sins, yet offer peace to  
them: *Into whatsoever House you come,* you have a Com-  
mand to offer peace in the Name of God, even to them.  
For, my Brethren, the Merit of Christ, it is of such in-  
finite value, that we may (if we knew what the meaning  
of that is) comfortably offer peace to the most Notori-  
ous vile sinners, that do Live upon the Face of the  
Earth. We read of Christ, that He would have His Dis-  
ciples to go and Preach in the High-ways, *Mat. 22.*

Saith Christ unto His Servants, *Go your wayes into the High-way, and as many as you shall find, bid to the Marriage.* Into the High-wayes; to Note those that were the most Unlikely, the most Vile and Wicked, *Go unto them, and bid them to the Marriage.* And in the last of *Mat. 15. Go (saith Christ) into all the World, and Preach the Gospel to every Creature.* They might say, Lord, perhaps we shall meet with some that are most Notorious Villains, and Blasphemers, and Prophane and Ungodly Creatures: Must we Preach the Gospel to them? I, *Go and Preach the Gospel to every Creature.* Into any place whatsoever you come, you shall offer *Peace unto them.*

I, but you will say, This may harden many in their prophaneness,

If God would have His Ministers offer Peace to the most prophane People that are:

Then may some prophane one say, I hope we shall do well enough then.

To that, I answer, The Lord will venture this. The Lord is so desirous of Magnifying His Grace, to offer it to those that belong to His Election, as that He will venture the Hardning of other men: *If they will be Hardned,* saith God, *let them be Hardned.* And so, Though a Minister ought to be as Careful as he can to prevent all Stumbling Blocks, yet, certainly, he is to Venture the Hardning of many Hundreds, rather than not to Preach the Gospel of God to any one Soul: He should more regard the Offering of the Gospel of Peace, in hope that there are some few that belong to Gods Election, than to fear the Hardning of many Hundreds. And if you should be Hardned by the offer of the Gospel of Peace, there could be no greater Brand of your Rejection, and that will make it appear that you are no such *Son of Peace.*

I, but then may some say, that are more Civil and Fair, What if God send the Gospel to the most prophane, surely there is no question but God will have mercy upon us; for He doth appoint His Ministers to offer the Gospel of peace to the worst?

I, but know what Christ saith, *That the Publicans and Harlots did enter into the Kingdom of God, rather than the Scribes and Pharisees.* God offers to the worst, yea, many times makes it more effectual to the worst, than He doth to some that are more Fair and Civil in their Conversations, because, indeed, they do not see the need that they have of Peace. I suppose you would think it to be one of the most Hard and Harsh things in the World, if you should be told, that all of you naturally were Enemies to God; and yet there is nothing more plain in the Scripture than this. Now because it is so hard to convince Civil men of this, therefore they are not so soon brought upon as prophane ones are.

Wherefore then, my Brethren, if this be so, it is an Encouragement: First to Ministers, when they come to any place, never to be troubled whatsoever people they be, if he come to Preach to them, and offer the Gospel of Peace to them; for who knows, but those that are the Worst and Vilest ones, may come in and embrace the Gospel of Peace; may be Vessels of Mercy, and may hereafter stand and admire at the Riches of Gods Goodness; and may live Eternally to Bless His Name, for this blessed Peace that is made between their Souls and Himself.

And, Secondly, All you that do hear this Point, stand for the present and admire at Gods Goodness, that ever this should be so, that ever you should hear such a Truth as this is; that Christ would have His Ministers offer

Terms

Terms of Peace to the Worst in the World. I say, Ad-  
 mire at this Goodness of Christ, and especially you that  
 are prophane ones, stand and wonder at the Goodness  
 of God; whereas He might have Curs'd thee, and sent  
 thee long since down to thine own place; yet He doth  
 give His Ministers charge to offer peace to thy Soul.  
 Think thus, The Lord in this hath done more to me,  
 than He hath done to all those Thousand Millions of An-  
 gels that sinn'd against Him. Those that were once glorious  
 Angels, and did sin against God, the Lord took Advan-  
 tage against them for their first sin, and upon that cast  
 them down into Chains of eternal Darknes; and did  
 resolve that He would never so much as enter into a Plea  
 about any Condition of Peace with them to all Eterni-  
 ty. This was the Way of God towards the Angels that  
 did sin against Him, that are now Devils. O you that  
 think the Lord to be a God of Mercy altogether, do but  
 consider of this, and consider to Tremble before Him, that  
 God should take Advantage against Millions of Angels  
 for so they were. For we read in Scripture, that Legi-  
 ons of Devils were in one man, and they were once  
 Angels, and they did but commit one sin against God,  
 and the Lord would not plea with them about Terms of  
 Peace. But mark now, The same God that was so se-  
 vere against Angels, that were His own Creatures, as  
 well as thou, and were more glorious Creatures, and  
 committed but one sin, yet would never enter into any  
 Terms of peace with them; this God is not only wil-  
 ling to Treat with thy Soul, to be at peace with thee;  
 but He sends forth His Messengers unto thee to Treat in  
 His Name, and doth give them command; that when  
 they come to thee they should offer Terms of peace to thy  
 Soul. Admire at this, thou that hast not been guilty  
 of

of one sinbat of Thousands! thou that hast liv'd like a Monster in the place where thou hast Liv'd, and hast liv'd in Rebellion against the Lord; yet He doth give Command to His Ministers to offer peace to thee. I say, stand and admire at this when thou goest Home, say it to thy Heart: O that the Great God should so Condescend to me, rather than to Angels! He doth so this day, and in His Name, I say, according to the Text: Peace be to every Soul that shall yet come in and return, yet come and repent; whatsoever they have been: whether thou mayst live to have any further offer of peace or no, the Lord knows. It is an Offer that thou hast this day, Look to thy self, come in, for there are many things in the Text, that might put you on: *For if there be not a Son of Peace, this Peace will turn back again.*

*Observ.* 5. But the last Point of all is this, That Ministers of the Gospel are, when they come to a place, to say, *First, Peace be to this place.* It should be the first Message that they should declare; they should begin with this: And there is a great deal of Emphasis in this word, *First say.* First, So we read of John Baptist, his first Sermon was this, *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.* And likewise, the First Sermon of Christ, in *Mat. 4. 16, 17.* And again, the Apostles, you shall read of them, *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.* The First Sermon of John Baptist, of Christ, and of the Apostles, was this, *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.* And the First Sermon that the Seventy Disciples was to Preach, was Peace. And in this the Lord deals with sinners, according to the Order He gave, in *Deut. 20. 10.* The Lord required that the First thing the Children of Israel should do, when they came against a City, it was to proclaim peace. And



And we read of *Alexander*, the First thing that he did, was to set up a Lamp, and his White Colours, and to Proclaim, That whosoever did come in before that Lamp was out, should have his Life and Peace. So when the Lord sends Ministers of the Gospel to any place, he sets up a Lamp in that place, and the First thing that He would have done, it is to Proclaim to all People to come in, that so they might have Peace: And it is to be done in the First place.

First, Because the Bowels of Gods Compassions are very strong, and Gods Mercy lies at His Heart uppermost, and therefore that is most ready, and He is most ready to vent it: That's the most proper Work of God, that He doth delight to Vent His Mercy, *Jer. 9. 24.*

Secondly, Because that when the Offer of Peace is, that hath a great deal of power to work upon the hearts of People; Now the Lord therefore would have that done at First, that is like most to prevail. We know that People at First when a Minister comes amongst them, they are set upon Novelties; now it is good to take advantage of that their Humour, and when they are hearkning after Novelty, that they should come to have some principal Doctrine of Salvation to be secretly Instill'd into them, that they should Drink in that before they are aware. So the Lord uses to work upon Mens Self-love: Every Creature loves it self, and therefore the Lord sees that it is a good advantage to work upon Mens self-love, to offer terms of Peace. And the truth is, that is it that gains the Heart of a Sinner: And God will out-bid the World, and Devil, and Flesh: *What do they offer any thing that may delight you, saith God, I will out-bid them all.* Christ out-bids the World, and Devil, in offering unto sinners a greater Good than World, or Devil

Devil, can possibly bring unto them. And indeed, this offer of Peace doth out-bid the World; that is, doth proffer a greater Good to a sinner, than World or Devil can possibly proffer to them. Nay then, saith the Soul, if I see that I may have a greater good by Repenting and Believing, than by going on in my sin, I will go that way; I will rather attend upon the Word: for I hear of great things that are there; about Reconciliation between God and man. Now this is the way to take the Hearts of men, and it is the way to break them of their stoutness and stubbornness: For certainly, every man naturally, hath a very stout and stubborn Heart against God. Therefore if *First* he be opposed, he will be ready to rise against God, and against His Truths, and against His Servants. Therefore it is good to come *First* with those things that their Hearts may close with all; that so they may be in a more preparation, that they may hearken to what the Lord shall reveal after, as necessary unto them.

But, you will say, If it be thus, Why is it then that Ministers do Preach so much of our miserable Condition in which we are?

The answer is, It's true, at First there should be a tender of peace; and I make no question, but you have had it so here: But now it's true, before the full Doctrine of Reconciliation with God is to be opened unto you, there is something to be opened unto you, about your miserable state by Nature; for it is impossible to open the Doctrine of Peace and Reconciliation, without the opening of that: And that may well be Justified. That though the First thing should be to say, *Peace*; yet before this can be opened at large unto People, they must come to know what their Natural state is. There is

some that would at First and at Last say, *Peace*; and would have nothing else Preached, and crys out against Preaching of any thing of the Law of God; which is meerly through their Ignorance, in not rightly understanding the Nature of the thing. For though at First, we are to open this Peace, yet when we come to open it, this hath that in the very Bowels of it, that will shew the most woful Condition of man by Nature, that possibly can be. As for Instance, Peace between God and us: Why, what are we Enemies? Is there an Enmity between God and us? Yes, that comes here: We cannot open the meaning of this Peace, but if we come once to open it, we must of necessity fall upon the Doctrine of Mans state by Nature; and shew what a Breach sin hath made between God and the Soul: And what infinite need there is of such a Redeemer, that we could no other way be redeemed, but that we must have such a Saviour, that must be both God and Man. Now when we come to open the Nature of this, it must needs shew you what your miserable Condition is by Nature.

But a word or two for the Application of this:

If God doth appoint His Ministers at First to come to you, and to make the proffer of Peace unto your Souls; then it should teach you presently to be willing to come and close with that Message. Gods Heart is full of Mercy towards you, as at the very First He will have this offered to you; then your hearts should likewise come in as well to God, and at the very First come in and close with that blessed Offer of Grace and Mercy. O, it is a great Encouragement to a Minister, when People come in at the very First offer. We have a notable Scripture  
for

for this, in *Psal. 118. 44.* Mark, *As soon as they hear of Me, they shall obey Me.* That's indeed a blessed thing, that when a People comes to hear of Christ, and of the Doctrine of Reconciliation, that as soon as they hear of it, they shall come in presently and Obey; that a Minister shall find his First Labours to be Fruitful and Effectual. I could tell you of one, as in *2 Cor. 12.* the beginning: And so I could say, That I knew one Twenty Years ago, or more, that at the very First day of Preaching of the Doctrine of the Gospel of that Truth unto a People, at the First day God pleased to bring in a Soul, and continue him to this very day; and make him a Godly, Gracious, and Holy man, that was a desperate and prophane wicked Wretch before. O that it might please God to Incourage the Hearts of His Ministers so, that at their First coming to People, they might find some Fruit of their Labours: For one that is Faithful, and comes among a People, he looks after his Ministry, and considers what he doth, and what Effect that hath, and so doth give account to God of what Effect that hath upon the Hearts of People. And, O what an Incouragement is this, and how Honourable to a People, if a Minister of God shall give up this account, and say, Lord, as soon as ever thou didst send me among such a People, they did begin to hearken after the Doctrine of Peace, and began to Consider what it was that was spoken: And they were exceedingly Hopeful by their Attention, and by other wayes they have given exceeding good hope, that they have received the Doctrine of Peace, that Thou didst send me about. And those, certainly, are most to be Honoured, that do First come in, though it be true, if men come in at the last Hour, there is a possibility to get to Heaven: but those that

come in at the First, they are the most acceptable to God, *Mich. 7.* beginning, *My soul desired the first ripe fruit.* So the Soul of God doth this day long after the First Fruits of every Minister, that comes among you: O, He looks into this Congregation, to see where shall be the First Fruits of the Ministry of such a one, and of such a one that comes among you, in *Rom. 16. 5.* It is spoken to the Honour of *Epenetus*, *That he was the First fruits of Achaia unto Christ.* O *Epenetus*, he is one that God did Honour, for *He was the First fruits of Achaia unto Christ.* And it is the Honour of *England*, that it was the First Kingdom that profest Christian Religion by the Authority of the Publick Magistrate; and God hath some special regard to *England*, to this very day, I make no Question, for that: And so in any place when God comes to them, and offers the Conditions of Peace; I say, they that come First in upon this First offer, will be most acceptable unto God. Therefore do not defer, and think I may come in at last; and before I die, time enough: But if God be so timely with thy Soul, that He would have His Ministers so begin with thee, do thou Answer to God, and begin with this God betimes, and especially you that are young ones, do not you reject it. O when God shall come to thy Soul, and say, *Peace be to thee*; I say, take heed of rejecting the First offer. For you that are young, what though you may be guilty of much Vanity and Folly other wayes, yet it may be you have not been guilty to this very day, of rejecting the offer of the Gospel: O take heed of Contracting that guilt upon you! Know if you do, it will make you a great deal harder, and that guilt will be a great deal worse, than of all your other sinnes; therefore come in betimes, as we read in *Mark 10. 17.*

There



There comes a young man running to Christ, and saith, *Good Master, what shall I do to Inherit Eternal Life?* He was a young Rich man, a Gentleman, one that had great Possessions; and the Text saith, he came running to Christ. O that God would perswade young ones, and those of Quality, seeing the Lord is pleased to begin with their Souls, that they would hasten, and come running to Christ, to know what are the Terms of Peace and Reconciliation; as it is said concerning John Baptist, in *Mat. 11. 12.* The Text saith, *And from the dayes of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of Heaven suffered violence, and the Violent take it by force.* The meaning is this, Because that this great Doctrine of, *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand,* was not Preached before John Baptist: He was the First that came to Preach this in the plainness of it in a Gospel way. Now saith the Text, *And from the dayes of John the Baptist until now, doth the Kingdom of Heaven suffer violence.* O the Hearts of People were mightily stirred, ever since the dayes of John Baptist; and why? Because that he Preached, that *The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.* Now that consists of Peace and Joy, and the Doctrine of Reconciliation between sinners, and the Blessed God; that indeed is the special part of the Kingdom of Heaven. Now he Preaching this Kingdom of Heaven, saith the Text, from that day the Kingdom of Heaven suffered Violence; and every one comes to know, Lord what shall I do, that I may enter into this Kingdom. O what a Blessed thing is it for Congregations, when the Lord shall send those amongst them, to bring Peace between God and their Souls: That it may said, from such a Day, from such a Time, that the Lord did send such among them that opened this Doctrine

**Drine of Peace, That the Kingdom of Heaven hath suffered Violence.** There hath many poor Souls come in and said, O Men and Brethren, What shall I do to be saved. And Blessed are they upon whom the Tender of the Gospel shall have this Effect. Now if there be any Sons of Peace here, that shall entertain this, here's the Blessing that is to be upon them: That the Peace of the Gospel shall rest upon them, upon that Parish, upon that House, upon that Soul.

**Also Ser-**  
 Lord, thou hast sent me among these  
 Gentiles, to bring Peace between God and their Souls: That  
 may stand from such a Day, from such a Time, as the  
 Lord did send such among them that opened their  
 Ears.

# Sermon II.

Luke 10. 6.

*And if the Son of Peace be there, your Peace shall rest upon it: If not, it shall turn to you again.*

**T**O leave what was said in the former Verse, and to proceed to what remains:

In this Verse, you have, First, A Supposition, *If the Son of Peace.*

Secondly, A Description of a good Hearer of the Gospel, *He is a Son of Peace.*

Thirdly, The Blessing upon him, *Your Peace shall rest upon him.* (We shall speak to no more, only these Three things at present.)

First, The Supposition, *If the Son of Peace be there.* Here there is a Supposition, That when the Lord sends the Ministry of the Gospel unto any place, that there will be some Sons of peace; it were a hard thing if we should come and find no Sons of Peace. *If the Son of Peace be there:* As if Christ should say, It is hopeful you may

may find some Sons of Peace. From whence the Point of Doctrine is this;

That when God doth send the Ministry of the Gospel to any place, there is hope that there is some Sons of Peace there.

There may be hope to Ministers and others, that they shall find some that will entertain their Gospel: In *Acts* 18. 9, 10. *Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night, by a Vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: For I have much People in this City.* When God sent Paul to Preach, there was a great deal of Opposition: Well, saith God, for all that Opposition, you shall Preach in this place: Why? *For I have much People in this City.* So that when God by His Providence, shall order the Word to come to any place, there is a hopeful Argument at least, that God hath People in that City. In *Mat.* 10. Where you have Christ sending of the Apostles to Preach, He bids them in *ver.* 5. *Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into the Cities of the Samaritans, enter ye not, saith Christ: But go rather to the lost Sheep of the House of Israel.* As if Christ should say, As for the Gentiles, and the Samaritans, I have yet none to Call there; the time is to come for the Gentiles to be Called: I would not therefore have you go thither, I would not have you lose your Labour: *But go unto the lost Sheep of the House of Israel.* There are many of the House of Israel, that are as lost Sheep, that are wandering from God, and their own Happiness: I would have you go thither, saith Christ; thereby intimating that there were some to be Called there, rather than in the other place. The Ministry of the Gospel, is the great Gift of Jesus Christ, that He gave when He Ascended

Ascended on high: And to what end did He give it? Mark, in *Ephes. 4. 11, 12.* to what end it is: *And He gave some Apostles: And some Prophets: And some Evangelists: And some Pastours and Teachers: For the perfecting of the Saints: (So it is Translated in your Books:)* But the Word in the Original is, *For the Joyning of the Saints;* the putting of them into Joynt: At first, to put them in to Christ, (and then that they may grow up) *For the Work of the Ministry, for the Edifying of the Body of Christ.* For the Building up of the Body of Christ. And this Text is quoted out of that Prophecie that we have in *Psal. 68. 18.* *Thou hast ascended on High, Thou hast led Captivity Captive, Thou hast received Gifts for men, &c.* Here's a Prophecie of Christ clearly: And the Apostle doth apply it in *Ephes. 4.* *Christ received Gifts for men,* here it is: And there it is, That He hath Dispensed Gifts to Men: And mark, *Yea, for the Rebellious also.* Those Men that are the most Rebellious, yet Christ hath received Gifts for them: What Gifts? The Ministry of the Gospel is the great Gift, that God the Father hath given to Christ, and Jesus Christ hath given it unto His Ministers, and sends them among the Rebellious. And to what end? That the Lord God might dwell among them. So that by this it appears till God send the Ministry of the Word among a People, the Lord God doth not dwell there: for it is, *That the Lord God might dwell among them.* They are without God in the World, but when that comes unto a place, then the Lord God comes to Dwell among them. So that then, you see the Point clear by Scripture, when the Lord sends the Ministry of the Gospel, there is some hope that there is some good intended for some in that place.

And the Reasons are these, 1. Because Christ sends His

Reas. 1.

Y

Mini-



Ministers, according as His Father sent Him. Now thus we have it in *John 20. 21.* *Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.* Mark, As God the Father sends Christ, so Christ sends Ministers. Well, How doth God the Father send Christ? Compare this Scripture with *John 3. 17.* Thus God the Father sends His Son, He doth not send His Son into the World that He might Condemn the World: That is not Gods primary End to Condemn the World, but that that God doth Aim at, in sending His Son into the World, it is, that by Him the World may be saved. Now then compare this Scripture with that other; saith Christ, *As my Father sent me, so send I you.* Now my Father sent Me into the World, not to Condemn the World, though by accident the World shall be Condemned, the rather because of Christs coming among them, and they refusing Him: But this is the Scope of my Fathers sending of Me into the World, that by Me the World may be Saved; and so do I send you, I send you to Places, not to Condemn them; not to Aggravate their Sin and their Condemnation: That is not my primary Intention, though this may fall out; but I send you to a place, that through your Ministry, Souls in that place may come to be Saved.

*Reas. 2.* A second Reason is, from the Promise of Christ unto His Ministers, when they go to any place to Preach. In the last words of the Gospel by Saint *Mat.* them, Christ sends them to Preach; and saith He, *Lo, I am with you alwayes, even unto the end of the World; I am with you to Assist you, and to Bless you whithersoever you go, even to the end of the World.* That is, with you, and with all that shall succeed you to Preach this Gospel in any place, unto the end of the World.

*Reas. 3.*

*Reas. 3.* Further, We know that the Gospel, it is the Arm of God, *Iſa. 53. 1. Who hath believed our Report, and to whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed.* And *Rom. 1. 16. It is the Power of God unto Salvation.* And if Gods Arm, and Gods Power unto Salvation come among a People, there is hopes that there is an Intention of some Good unto some of them.

*Reas. 4.* The Preaching of the Gospel : It brings the Day of Grace and of Salvation, to any place whereſoever it comes ; and ſo long as that doth continue to any place, ſo long the day of Grace and Salvation continues to the place. This you have clearly, *2 Cor. 6. beginning, We then as Workers together with Him, beſeech you alſo, that ye receive not the Grace of God in vain. For He ſaith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of Salvation have I ſuccoured thee : Behold, NOW is the accepted time, behold, NOW is the day of Salvation.* Now : When was that Now ? That was, when the Apoſtles came and Preached among them, the Doctrine of Reconciliation : *Now is the accepted time, Now is the day of Salvation.* Now if you come in, you may be accepted : Now is the time, that if you be appointed to be Sav'd, you muſt come in now.

*Reas. 5.* And this Scripture doth put me upon a Fifth Reason of the Point, and that is : That when the Gospel comes to be Preached to a place, it doth not only make an Accepted time, and a day of Salvation : But it is the Fruit of the Prayer of Jeſus Chriſt, even of that Prayer that Chriſt hath made to God the Father, that He would in ſuch a time ſend the Miniſtry of the Gospel, to be clearly and powerfully Taught in that place. And if you ask me where the place is that doth prove it, it is in *Iſa. 49. 8.* You have there almoſt the very

some words that you have here: *Thou, saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of Salvation have I helped thee.* Now this is clearly meant of Christ, if you look both unto the Coherence of the words, with what hath been before, and that which follows after: *For, saith He, I will preserve thee, and give thee for a Covenant of the People, to Establish the Earth, to cause to Inherit the desolate Heritages.* Now saith God concerning Christ: Thus, saith the Lord, *In an acceptable time have I heard thee.* What is that acceptable time? It is that which the Apostle doth Interpret to be, *A day of Salvation.* The Apostle speaks of an acceptable Time, and of a day of Salvation; and saith he, *Now it is.* Now while we are Preaching the glad Tidings of the Gospel unto you. And here, saith the Holy Ghost, *The Lord hath heard thee in an acceptable time, and in a day of Salvation.* That is, When as Jesus Christ did Pray to God the Father, for His Church that should be; that God would send the Ministry of the Gospel, unto those whom the Father had given unto Him from all Eternity: I say, Jesus Christ did Pray unto the Father for them. Now, saith God, *I have heard thy Prayer, and I have granted what thou Prayest for.* And this hearing of thy Prayer, it is an acceptable Time, and it is a day of Salvation. Thou hast a day of Salvation according to thy prayer; and this very day the Apostle doth Interpret of sending the Gospel unto any place: So that where the Gospel comes, it is not to be lookt upon as a thing that comes meerly by Accident, or by an ordinary Providence of God, as other things; but it is that that comes unto a place by Virtue of the Prayer of Jesus Christ, of the Intercession of Jesus Christ unto the Father, for that particular Place, or Town, or Parish.

And

And this is the Reason why the Lord leaves some places destitute of Help, in Ignorance and Darkness, that they scarce ever come to hear of Jesus Christ: And others that it may be are in themselves as unworthy as the other; they come to have the great things of the Gospel opened to them: The reason of the difference is, Jesus Christ hath Interceded before the Father for the one, and not for the other; and one is the Fruit of the Prayer of Jesus Christ, and the other Christ hath let go, because they do not so belong unto Him: He hath not those among them, that are to be made the *Sons of Peace*.

*Reas. 6.* Yet further, When the Gospel comes to a place, there is hope of Good, because that the Gospel hath in it self so much power. I say, it is not only as an Ordinance to convey the Word of God. But though Mans Words and Ministry hath little in it, yet the Truths of the Gospel, they have in them a mighty Strength; there are such wonderful things that the Gospel doth Reveal wheresoever it comes, that one would wonder that the Hearts of all People should not be taken with it. Yea, there are such things that are made known in the Gospel, that one would think might break the Heart of any Devil in Hell. That if God should send the Gospel unto the Devils (if they were not gone Irrecoverably) one would think that what is made known in the Gospel, might break the heart of a Devil. O that God should be Reconciled to Man! To send His own Son to Die for base Worms, upon whom the Lord might have Glorified His Infinite Justice upon to all Eternity. There is that in the Gospel, that it is to Admiration, that all people do not come in unto it. What doth Christ say, *If the Son of Peace*. It is a wonder that all do not come in to Imbrace the Blessed Gospel. The Patience of God doth

doth Lead to Repentance ; Then what might the Grace of God do, that is held out in the Gospel ? The Lord doth reveal such Arguments to draw People, that to speak after the manner of Men, we may conceive : That if the Lord should have Studied and Contriv'd with His own Infinite Wisdom, what strong Arguments He would use to work upon the Hearts of the Children of Men ; one would not have imagined how an Infinite Wisdom, should have found out such to perswade Men to come in. One may say of the Arguments of the Gospel, as the Master of the Vineyard said, when he had Let out his Vineyard to Husbandmen, and sent for Fruit ; one Servant was beaten, and the other was misused : *But at last, saith he, I will send my Son, for surely they will reverence my Son.* Why now, this may be said of other Arguments. To compare those things that are in the Gospel, with all other things that can be Preached unto People : Indeed a Minister of God may come with many strong Arguments, to draw the Hearts of People from their sin, and to draw them unto Repentance. But now, this Argument will not do it, nor the other Argument will not do it ; they stand out this and that Argument : I, but saith the Lord, I will send the Ministry of my Gospel among them, I'll reveal my Son unto them. Certainly, they will Reverence this Argument, and their Hearts will be taken with this Argument. That's another Reason why there is great hopes, when the Ministry of the Gospel comes, that there should be some Sons of Peace found there.

*Reas. 7.* Further, Another, is this, Because it is the Way of God with a People, when He sends them the Gospel in the Power of it, and the Clearness of it. I say, the Way of God then, is not so much to have regard to any of their sins, that ever were Committed before that time,



time, but now to go as it were upon a new Score: I do not say, but if they should perish, then they must perish for their old sins too. But I mean thus, That when the Lord sends the Ministry of the Gospel to a place, the Lord now doth not so much look at any sin that they liv'd in before, in the dayes of their Ignorance; there is none of those sins now that shall Damn them, upon condition that they now do Imbrace the Gospel that is offered to them: Therefore there is a great deal of hope, that there may be some Sons of Peace: For the Riches of Gods Mercy hath not yet had the Glory; the Turn as it were of it towards this People, that yet have not had the Gospel in the Cleareness, and in the Power of it brought amongst them. Now God looks thus upon a People, that He sends His Gospel unto. It's true, they have liv'd in Blindness, in Darkness, in Prophanities, in Sabbath-breaking, in Ungodliness: Alas, they did not know what the Councils of my Will were, concerning the Eternal state of their Souls, which is revealed in that Gospel of Mine. They knew no better things than to Eat and Drink, and make provision for the Flesh; therefore for all that time of their Ignorance, I will not regard, I will Wink at it. But now God Calls for Repentance: So you find it in *Acts 17. 30.* *And the times of this Ignorance God Winked at, but now God Calleth all men every where to Repent.* As if the Lord should say, As for the times of your Ignorance, though you were very Prophane, very Superstitious, very Ungodly, yet I am content to Wink at it; but now I am content to go, as it were, upon a new Score. Now come in and Repent, and your Souls shall live. Now, my Brethren, when Mercy comes to have a Turn towards a People, who knows what may be done. As thus, Now suppose that a Man hath lain Sick a long time, and his Sick-

Sickness increases upon him, and it is very dangerous: If you should come to such a Man, and say, What means have you used? What Physicians have you had? Now it appears that he hath not used such a Medicine that is Sovereign for such a Disease, it hath not been tried; now if that Medicine hath not been used, you will have a great deal of hope concerning the Life of your Friend, until it be tried, and you see it doth no good, that it makes no alteration upon the body of your Friend. So it is here, People that have liv'd Profanely, and Ungodlily, and their Hearts have not been brought to God. I, but what hath God revealed his Grace in Christ unto their Souls? Have they known the Blessed things of the Gospel? If not, there may be a great deal of hope: For when Gods Mercy shall come to have its Turn upon this People, it's very like there are many, whom God intends Everlasting good unto. But now to wind up this Point in a word of Application.

Appl.

If this be so, O do not frustrate Hope! There are hopes that God intends Mercy to a People, when He sends the Gospel to be Preached to them at any time; though they may say, we have had it Preached to us before; Yet if He sends it a-fresh, it seems that Mercy must have the second Turn to this People. I say now, do not frustrate Hope.

**First, The Hope of God Himself.** You will say, The Hope of God, why, God knows whether it will work upon People, yea or no; and that cannot be Frustrated.

But for the Answer to that, We are to know, that God is pleased in Scripture, to Speak after the manner of Men, and God Himself doth Speak after this manner, as if He

had

had some good hopes that People would be wrought upon, when He sends His Ministers among them. As that place which I named before, *I will send my Son, surely they will reverence him*: I hope that will prevail. And a suitable place we have of Gods expressing himself after this manner, in Jer. 36. 2, 3. *Take thee a Roll of a Book, and Write therein all the Words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, &c. It may be (saith God) that the House of Judah will hear all the evil that I purpose unto them.* Go your way and preach saith God unto the Prophet, it may be they will hear, and return every Man from his evil way. This was not now the Ministry of the Gospel but of Threatings; and yet God speaks with some expectation, as if so be he did expect that they should; it may be they will, saith God. And so in Zeph. 3. 7. *I said, surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive Instruction; so their dwelling should not be cut off; howsoever I punished them, but they rose early, and corrupted all their doings*: God was frustrated in his Expectation; yet I said, *surely thou wilt fear me*. Thus the Lord, though he knows all his works from all eternity, yet he speaks after the manner of Men; and saith, surely such and such means may do good upon such and such people: O therefore, let not the Expectation of the Lord be frustrated; and let not the expectations of the Ministers of the Gospel be frustrated. Certainly, when they come to any place, they are to come with their hearts filled with hope, that there are Sons of Peace in that place; and there is nothing that can encourage a faithful Minister of the Gospel to spend his time in Studying, and Opening of the Mysteries of Grace more then this; that he comes with his Heart filled with hope, that there are some Sons of Peace

in that place. O do not frustrate this expectation. It is a vile thing for the Ministers of the Gospel to come to any place, but to gain Sons of Peace: And indeed upon this expectation the heart of a faithful Minister, who understands what the meaning of Peace with God is, cannot but be drawn forth towards a People; why he comes with this expectation, and he looks after his Ministry to see what becomes of it. O therefore do not frustrate the Expectations of your Ministers in this: Do not give them occasion to make their Complaint, that they have spent their Strength in vain.

Yea, and further, As it is the Expectation of the Ministers that Preach, so it is the Expectation of all the Saints of God. None of Gods People that know a place that hath Liv'd in Darkness and Blindness before, but if they see the Lord by His Providence, carrying the Ministry of the Gospel with Power in that place, they think thus with themselves, Whom is it that the Lord intends good unto? Surely the Lord hath a Mercy to such a People. And they will wait to see who it is that God will pitch upon.

likewise, Do not frustrate the Expectation that the Angels themselves, in 1 Cor. 11. a place, I suppose you know, where the Women are to be Covered, because of the Angels: It doth appear by that Text, that the Angels are in Congregations, when a Congregation is met together to hear the Word of God Preached, and for other Accounts, there the Angels are Met; And I make no question, but this place is as full of Angels as of Men, and they are here present, and do look upon our Behaviour, and wait for the time when God will be pleased to Work upon the Hearts of some or other. O to what Family, to what particular Soul doth God intend good unto.

unto. O that we might know if, that we might have Joy in Heaven: For so the Scripture tells us, That at the Conversion of sinners, there is Joy in Heaven, and surely they wait for it. O that we might see the Ministry of the Gospel work effectually upon Souls, that so we might joy for it.

And now let every particular Soul reason thus with it self: What is it so, that there is hope that there may be some *Sons of Peace*; why may it not be I, though vile, though a very wretched Creature? Yet I hear that the time of Ignorance God winks at, only now He calls to Repent: If I feel God beginning to jogg my Heart now, I may be the Man or Woman, that the Lord intended from all Eternity. For we are to know, that which God doth now in time, is no other than He did determine from Eternity: And I say, if you feel your Hearts stirred, and wrought upon by the Ministry of the Gospel, you may know that God did intend you in particular. And Christ, when He did Pray to God the Father for this acceptable time, that you were particularly intended in that Prayer of His; and you are not excluded to be saved any more than any, and therefore it may fall upon you. Perhaps in a Family, it may fall upon the poor Servant, or Child, and the others may be left: But some or other it is like, it will fall upon.

And, my Brethren, If this be so, If there be hopes when the Gospel comes to be Preached, that there are *Sons of Peace* in that place, it is a most Cursed thing for any to stand to oppose the Gospel, when it comes to any place. It is very seldom but some or other will be Rail- ing, and Crying out against it: But take heed what thou doest, Wilt thou stand against God, to cross God in such a blessed End as this is? It may be the Lord hath



Some Souls in that place, He intends Eternal good unto : And wilt thou stand out against that, and cross God ? But especially take heed you do not oppose the Gospel, in any place where there is not only a remote hopes, but it comes to be Nearer and Fuller than it was before, and there is some real Manifestation that God intends Good unto some : O take heed of thy Opposition of it there. This was the Reason that *Paul* was so mightily provok'd, when *Elimas* came to resist his Ministry ; of which you may read in *Acts* 13. *There was one Sergius Paulus, which sent for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the Word of God.* Now this *Sergius Paulus* was a Chief Man in the place where *Paul* Preached, he was the Deputy, and there was good hopes that God would Convert his Soul. *And Elimas the Sorcerer, he stood and opposed, and sought to turn away the Deputy from the Faith.* Now when *Paul* was in so good a hope that he should gain not only a Soul, but a publick Man, that might do a great deal of good : O the Spirit of *Paul* was mightily provok'd He looks upon *Elimas*, and sets his Eyes upon him (the Text saith) and said : *O full of all Subtily, and all Mischief, thou Child of the Devil, thou Enemy of all Righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the Right Wayes of God, &c.* *Paul* was a Man of a very Quiet and Meek Spirit, and yet mark how full of Passion he was at this time : O this provok'd the Spirit of *Paul*, he was not able to bear it. We never read that *Paul* was so troubled, when they Persecuted him, when they put him into Prison : But as if *Paul* should say, Do with me what you will, put me into Prison, do what you will with my Carcass ; but do not frustrate my Expectation in Gaining a Chief Man, that may do a great deal of Service for God. When he was but in fear that he should be frustrated of his hope, he

he was not able to bear it. And certainly, nothing can go so near to the Heart of any Faithful Minister, as that there should be any to stand to frustrate his hope of Gaining of Souls. Perhaps in a Family, if one or two doth but go to hear the Word, the others will be Scorning and Jeering; and one Neighbour will be Scorning at another, and all to frustrate the Hopes of God, of His Ministers, and of the Saints and Angels. But know, when thou do'st any thing to oppose the Ministry of the Gospel, thou do'st set thy self what in thee lies, both to frustrate the Hopes of God and His Ministers, and His Saints and Angels; and thou wilt find this to be a hard work, thou do'st but Kick against the Pricks. And thus much for this Point, we come now unto the next.

That good Hearers of the Gospel, are called the Sons *Doff. 2* of Peace: *If the Son of Peace be there.* They are sometimes called, *The Children of the Kingdom*, as in *Mat. 13.* there they have that Title given unto them. Those that are good Hearers of the Word, in the Parable that you have about the Seed.

Those that Imbrace the Gospel; and are the good Hearers of it, they are the *Sons of Peace*, and that in a Five-fold regard:

*First*, Because they are such as are ordained to Peace, as the Son of Perdition, one that is appointed to Perdition.

*Secondly*, They are those that do attend upon the Gospel of Peace, as in *Mark 2. 19.* *The Children of the Bride-Chamber*, those that do attend upon the Gospel.

*Thirdly*, Because they are Obedient unto the Gospel: As the Sons of *Bellah*, are Sons of Wickedness; so the Sons of Peace, such as yield Obedience unto the Gospel of Peace.

*Fourthly*,

*Fourthly*, The Sons of Peace, because they are Begotten by the Ministry of the Gospel.

*Fifthly*, Because they are such as shall Inherit the Peace of the Gospel, therefore *Sons of Peace*.

There is somewhat that every one of these may afford unto us, but I take the first Three are principally meant; therefore of the other I shall speak of but a little by the way.

The First is, Because they are appointed unto that Benefit of the Gospel of Peace: So that from thence the Point is this:

*Doct.* That all those that are good Hearers, and Entertainers of the Ministry of the Gospel that comes to any place, they are such as are appointed from all Eternity to enjoy the Peace of the Gospel. *Judas* was not more a Son of Perdition, than such a one is a Son of Peace. That is, There was no more Evidence that *Judas* was appointed to Eternal perdition, than there is certain Evidence that such a one is appointed from all Eternity to enjoy the Benefit of the Gospel.

I shall give you these two Scriptures for it, the first is in *Acts* 2. latter end, *And the Lord added to the Church*, (that is, Converted to Himself, made His Gospel effectual) *daily such as should be saved*; such as were appointed to be Saved. And another Scripture there is, which saith, *That all those which were ordained to Eternal Life, believed*. But above all, I will give you this one Scripture, in *1 Thes.* it is a most excellent Text for this purpose, and a mighty Encouraging Text to all those, that shall be found good Hearers of the Gospel: *Chap. 1. 4. 5. Knowing, Brethren beloved, your Election of God.* We know that you are those whom God hath Eternally Elected: How do you know that? Were you in the Council

Counsel of God, in Gods Treasury, to know what His Thoughts were: How can you tell the Election of God? Mark, The Words following doth give you the Reason for what He saith, knowing your Election of God: *For our Gospel came not unto you in Word only, but also in Power.* Indeed when the Gospel comes to a place, if it comes in Word only unto a Congregation, they come indeed to hear, and flock to hear what a Man can say; This is no Argument of a Mans Election: but when it comes not only in Word but in Power, when you begin to feel the Power of the Word upon your Hearts. Though you come, it may be, at first out of Curiosity and Novelty, and took notice of nothing that would be done; but when you came there, the Gospel took hold upon your Spirits, and over-powered your Hearts. Now by that you may know, that you are one, that are appointed unto the Benefit of the Gospel of Peace, that you are Elected of God. Those Souls that feel the Power of the Gospel upon them, may know certainly that they were Elected from all Eternity. As if God should Speak from Heaven, and say, Such a Man or Woman, they are Elected from all Eternity; we may now as well doubt of that Voice, as we may doubt of a Man or Woman, that hath the power of the Gospel upon their Hearts: So that it appears by this Text, that where there are good Hearers of the Gospel, they are the *sons of Peace*; that is, appointed for all Eternity to have the benefit of Peace. And there are these particulars in this:

*First*, They may know that the Lord had Thoughts upon them in particular, before the World was; yea, that the Lord, when He saw the great Lump of Mankind before Him, He set apart these for the Praise of His Grace

Grace in Christ for ever: Left others, and set apart these.

Yea, They may know, that there were Transactions between the Father and the Son, about their Souls in particular, from all Eternity.

Yea, you may further know, That God the Father did give them unto His Son from Everlasting: For so Christ saith, *That those come to Him, whom the Father hath given Him.* There are a certain Number, that God the Father hath given to Jesus Christ, to Redeem from all Eternity; and said to Him, *Son, take these souls, and do you undertake for them:* And He hath made Answer, *Father, I do undertake to satisfy Thy Wrath and Justice for them.* Now were it not a blessed thing to know, that when there were such Transactions between the Father and the Son, that thou wert mentioned in particular, that God the Father did give thee by Name to His Son. Certainly, if thou beest an Entertainer of the Gospel, thou mayest be certain of this thing.

Further, Thou mayst know this; As God the Father did give thee to His Son, so He did make a Promise to save thee. There was a Covenant between the Father and the Son for thy Salvation, according to that Text in *Tit. 1. 2.* That Scripture speaks of a Promise of Eternal Life before the World began: How could there be a Promise before the World began? To whom could it be made? When there is a Promise made, there must be some body to receive it? Surely it was: The Promise was between the Father and the Son, from all Eternity, concerning thy Soul in particular.

Yea, and further, Thou mayst know, That when God did send His Son to take Mans Nature upon Him, He sent Him into the World, to have a care of thy Soul, as well as any others.

Yea,



Yea, and further, That when God did from all Eternity appoint, that at such a time and place, such means should be for good; that He did likewise Aim at thee. And indeed, many may see the Work of God wonderful this way. Thus those that are good Hearers of the Gospel, they are the *Sons of Peace*, in this First regard, because they are appointed by God, unto the Benefit of the Peace of the Gospel, from all Eternity. And it may be a mighty Encouragement unto those, who do begin to feel the Gospel to be powerful upon their Hearts.

*Secondly*, The other is, *A Son of Peace*, that doth attend upon the Gospel. That is, when the Ministry of the Gospel doth come, he doth make it his care to make preparation for it; he doth come to hear the Gospel as a matter of great Moment; and when he doth come to hear, he doth bend his whole Soul to attend to what is heard, and he dares not give liberty to the wandering of his Thoughts: And he doth charge his Memory with such and such truths, to think of these whatsoever he doth forget. And here's now a *Son of Peace*; as the Children of the Bride-Chamber, they are such as do attend there: So he, *A Son of Peace*, attends upon the Ministry of the Gospel. Now by this Second, thou mayst know the First; thou mayst know whither thou beest a Son: That is, whither thou beest one that from all Eternity, wert set apart by God the Father, to obtain the Peace and Benefits of the Gospel.

But, *Thirdly*, The Son of the Gospel, is to be as an Obedient Child: To come with a Resolution, when he comes to hear the Word, Whatsoever the Lord shall this day make known of his Mind unto me, the Lord knows, that I would fain yield unto it. I come

A a

with

with this Resolution, every time I come to hear the Ministry of the Gospel: This is now a *Son of Peace*, that comes with such a Heart, resolved to be Obedient unto it.

2. He doth open his Understanding, and is easily Convinced of those Truths, that he doth hear Revealed in the Ministry of the Gospel, he doth not stand Opposing of them.

3. He doth open his Heart, to accept of the Conditions of the Covenant; when the Lord Reveals the Doctrine of the Covenant of Life and Peace, the Soul doth open it self, to admit of the Conditions of the Covenant. Lord Speak, thy Servant hears: Reveal what Thou wilt, my Soul is here ready and willing, to accept of the Covenant whatever it be.

Further, He doth give up himself to be Moulded by the Gospel, according to that Phrase, in Rom. 6. 17. *The Doctrine into which ye were delivered.* So it is in the Original, that is, There is a delivering of the Soul up to the Ministry of the Word, as the Mettle is to the Mould, to be Fashioned by it. So here, a *Son of Peace* doth give up his Soul to be Moulded by the Word; whatsoever he was before, yet here he is now ready to give up his Soul to be Fashioned, to be Framed by the Word. Here's a *Son of Peace*.

Further, He doth in his Conversation, Act what he doth hear in the Ministry of the Word; and he doth endeavour to Live according to the glorious Gospel that he doth hear, and he doth Labour to become the Gospel: So that one may know in such a ones Family, and in such a ones Life, a mighty deal of Alteration.

And again, Such a one, as is Begotten by it, is not only Obedient, but indeed, there is the work of Regeneration

neration wrought, and therefore he may be called a Son, saith the Apostle, *I have Begotten you by the Gospel.* And so, by the Word of Truth, you are Begotten. Abundance of Scriptures might be for this: Those that the Gospel works Savingly upon, the Gospel doth not only stir their Hearts, but put a new Life into them. They live by new Principles, by new Rules; they find a mighty Power in the Gospel to Beget them again: And such as these are, are Sons, because they are Heirs of the Gospel, Children of the Kingdom. But that we shall have more use of in the other place, when we speak of the Blessing of the Gospel that shall be upon them.

Now to Apply these in a few words. The good Hear- *Appl.*  
ers of the Gospel, are the *Sons of Peace.* O what a blessed thing it is, to be the *Sons of Peace!* Better to be the Son of Peace, than a Monarch, than of the greatest of the World; better to be this Son of Peace, than to enjoy all the World. If the Lord should give thee the Inheritance of all the World, He doth no tdo so much for thee, as when He makes thee to be a *Son of Peace.* It may be many of you were Born very mean, and you are like to Inherit but little of this World; but if the Lord work upon your Hearts in the Ministry of the Gospel, that which comes by this, makes you blessed Creatures for ever: For by this means, you come to be the Sons of the Living God: You come to be the Children of Life, and Co-heirs with Jesus Christ. O how Industrious should Ministers of the Gospel be, to Beget such Sons of Peace to God. St. Paul, in *Gal. 4.* he tells the *Galatians* there, that he did Labour and Travel in Birth, till Christ was formed in them: *My little Children of whom I Travel in Birth again, until Christ be formed in you.* A Faithful Minister of the Gospel doth even Travel in Birth, that

he might beget *Sons of Peace* to Jesus Christ. And, O the Blessedness of this Work, for God to set Men on Earth to this Work, to Beget Sons of Peace. If we should Beget you to be Children of the Bond-woman, it were somewhat; that is, to strike fear into your Hears by the Terrors of the Law: I, but to Beget you to be Children of Peace, and of the Free-woman; this is a great deal more. This is such a Work, as it is that which doth satisfie the Soul of Jesus Christ when He sees it: It satisfies His Soul for all His Sufferings: As in *Isa. 53. 10, 11. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him*: That is, It pleased God the Father, to bruise Jesus Christ. For this is an Evangelical Chapter. *When thou shalt make His Soul an Offering for sin. Mark, He shall see His Seed, He shall prolong His dayes; and the Pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand*: He shall see some Children Born unto Him, some *Sons of Peace*. But, Mark, *He shall see of the Travel of His Soul, and shall be satisfied*. So that when there is a Son of Peace, he is the Fruit of the Travel of the Soul of Jesus Christ; and he is the Fruit at the Second hand, of the Travel of the Souls of Gods Ministers, their Souls Travel, as you heard before in *Paul*, but that not so much. He is the Fruit of the Travel of the Soul of Jesus Christ; the Soul of Christ Travels with this Birth, and this Work of God upon the Heart of such a one, it is the Fruit of this Travel of the Soul of Christ.

And Mark further, *And He shall be satisfied*. As if the Holy Ghost here should say, Let but Jesus Christ see a Soul brought in to Himself, let Him but see any Begotten to be the *Sons of Peace*, Christ saith, *I am satisfied*, for all the Blood that I have shed, for all my Sufferings; I have been willing to come from the Bosom of my Father, to take your Nature upon me, and I did endure

endure the Withdrawings of my Father, when I cried, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me.* I was made a Man of Sorrows, and my Father did Bruise me, and my Soul was made an Offering for sin. But now, What will satisfie the Soul of Jesus Christ for all this? Saith he, Let me see the Travel of my Soul, let me see the Ministry of the Gospel to work upon some Souls, to make them to be *Sons of Peace*, I have then what I have Travelled for, I am satisfied; I think this is even worth my Suffering, I account my Sufferings well Answered; I account my Blood well laid down, that I might gain these Souls unto my self. O what an Encouragement is here unto Souls to Imbrace the Gospel, to be the Children of Peace. And how should you seek unto God, for your Children and Friends. O that God would make His Gospel effectual to Beget them to be *Sons of Peace*. You that are tender Mothers, you should look upon your Children, and think thus: It may be the Lord hath some Thoughts of good unto this Child; and when they come to hear the Word, you should pray earnestly for them, that the Lord would Speak a Word to their Soul: And you should take as much Pains, and as earnestly Pray, that the Second Birth may be perfected, as you did for the First Birth. So it was with *Austins* Mother, he saith, She did take as much pains, and shed as many Tears for the Conversion of his Soul, as she did at his First Birth; and so she obtain'd her Labour. I put this to you that are Mothers, you complain of your Children: Have you Laboured as much for the Second Birth of your Children, as your Labour was when you did Bear them in your Wombs? It was so with that gracious Mother for her Son. You have  
Sons



Sons, it may be, that are rather Sons of *Relial*; now you should Strive with God in Prayer, and Labour to the uttermost of your Power, that they may be wrought upon by the Gospel, to be made the *Sons of Peace* by it.

## Sermon III.

Luke 10. 6.

*And if the Son of Peace be there, &c.*

We Proceed,

**N**OW follows the Blessing upon those that shall be Entertainers of the Gospel, that are the Sons of Peace, *Your Peace shall be upon them.* That is, They shall have all the good of the Gospel to be theirs: That's the meaning. For it was wont among the Jews to be the Expression of all kind of Good: *Peace be to you.* By the Name of Peace, they did express all good. *So that your Peace shall abide upon them:* That is, All the good of the Gospel, that you carry to them shall be theirs: So then, from these words, from the Blessing that is upon the right Entertainers of the Gospel, here you have these Four Points;

*First,* That those that Entertain the Gospel, shall have the Peace of the Gospel.

*Secondly,* That this is a great Mercy from God, and the Portion of the Sons of Peace, not only to have some sudden Apprehensions of the Excellency of the Gospel;

Gospel; but to have the Good and the Blessing of the Gospel to abide upon them, to rest upon them: That's the Second. And then,

*Thirdly*, That those that do Entertain the Gospel, do bring a Blessing upon the places where they Live. For so, if you observe it, and look into the Words, you shall find that it is not said, And if the Son of Peace be there, your Peace shall rest upon him: But if the Son of Peace be there; that is, in the House into which you come, your Peace shall rest upon it: Upon the House, upon the Place where the Son of Peace is. (So that that's the Third Point, where there is any that do Embrace the Gospel, such a one doth bring a Blessing to the Place and the Family where he Lives.)

*Fourthly*, The Consideration of the great good that a Minister of God shall bring unto a Place, in case he be Entertain'd, is a mighty Encouragement to them in their Ministry. Saith Christ, *Go your way and Preach, perhaps you may meet with some Difficulties; but this is your Errand that you are sent withal, to Preach the Peace of the Gospel. And this is the great good that you shall bring to all those that shall entertain your Message: That if they be the Sons of peace, and entertain you, you shall be the Instrument to bring all the good of the Gospel upon them.* These are the Four Doctrinal Points clearly in this Blessing. *Your peace shall rest upon them.* It is the Second of these that I shall stick most on; the First, I confess, is a large Point, that's this:

That whosoever Entertains the Gospel, shall have the Blessing of the Gospel upon them, the peace of the Gospel, *Your peace shall be upon them.* That which is here promised, you have promised almost in the same words in the same case, *Mat. 10. 13.* And if the House be worthy

worthy, let *your* peace come upon it. If it be worthy. And in *Gal. 6, 16.* *As many as walk according to this Rule, peace be upon him, and upon the Israel of God:* That is, he that submits to the Rule of the Gospel, he shall have the peace of the Gospel: The words in the *Greek* are, *To this Canon:* The Canon of the Gospel, he shall have the peace of the Gospel. As if Christ should say, If there be any good in the Gospel, if I have purchased any good by my Blood; they shall have that Good, and that Blessing. Now to Open what the Benefit and Blessing of the Peace of the Gospel is, I confess, would be a large Argument: And because I have else-where Opened the Doctrine of Reconciliation, the Doctrine of the Peace of the Gospel; I shall for the present, here pass very briefly over it, and give you a little of the Substance of it, and then pass as soon as I can to the Second Point, where we shall spend the greatest part of the time.

*Your Peace shall be upon it:* What's that? You shall have the Peace of the Gospel. O this is an inestimable Blessing indeed! For the Peace of the Gospel. It is,

First, Peace with God Himself: Whereas if they did understand themselves and know God, they would know that they are Enemies unto God, and that the Wrath of the Eternal God is out against them: But if they come but to entertain your Message, they shall be Reconciled unto this Infinite God; the Wrath of the Infinite God shall be turn'd quite away from them, so as they shall never be in danger of any one Spark of the Wrath of God to come out against them, there shall be this Peace: Whereas before they were in such a Condition, as if they knew themselves and God, the Presence of God would be terrible unto them. But if they entertain  
your

your Message, they shall come to be able to look upon that God that was an Infinite provoked Deity, as a Friend; they shall look upon His Face with joy, they shall have free access unto His Presence, as Children unto the presence of their Father: Whereas before they had cause to fear every moment some dreadful fruit of the Wrath of God, to pursue and sink them. But now, whatsoever Judgments of God shall be abroad in the World, they shall be in a secure Condition; they shall be free from all, they shall be built upon the Rock; when Tempests and Storms shall be abroad to Sink others, they shall not be stirred, for they shall have peace with God.

Your Peace, that is, even peace with all Creatures; they shall have the blessing of that peace too: Whereas before, all the Creatures of God were as the Hosts of God, His Armies ready prepared to Avenge the Quarrel of God upon them: Every Creature as it were crying unto God, Lord send me, Lord send me, that I may strike this Sinner, that I may strike this Blasphemer, this unclean Wretch, and this prophane Wretch; and if God would but give Commission to any one Creature, it would presently be their Destruction: But upon their entertaining of your Message, there shall be Peace between them and all Creatures, so as no Creature in all the World, shall ever be able to do them hurt. Though they shall Live in the midst of an evil World, yet this shall be their Condition, That all good Creatures shall be made useful to them for good, and there is no evil Creature shall ever be able to do the least evil to them.

And again, They shall have peace of Conscience, whereas before their Consciences were ready to flie in their faces. And they, indeed, sought many wayes and means to quiet their Consciences, but could never get any true

quiet of Conscience. But upon their entertainment of your Message, their Consciences shall be pacified in the Blood of the Messiah; therefore bid them be of good comfort, their Consciences shall be able to answer all Accusations that can be laid against them. For so the Scripture tells us of the Answer of a good Conscience, *1 Pet. 3. 21.* Thus, Let the Devil, let Temptation, charge upon one that is reconcil'd to God what they can, *A good Conscience through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, is able to answer all Accusations and Temptations. This shall be the Peace that shall be upon them.

And, Fourthly, The Word of God shall be at Peace with them. They shall have Interest in all the Promises that are in the Word of God, the whole Word shall speak nothing but good unto them: Whereas before, the Word of God was full of Terror, and came against them as their Enemy; but now all that is in the Word, shall be Peace unto them, *If the Son of Peace be there.* This is the Peace that you shall bring upon them, Peace with God, and with the Creatures, and with their Consciences, and with the Word. And then, O the Blessing that is upon all the Entertainers of the Gospel. O the happy Condition that the Entertainers of the Gospel are in. This, my Brethren, is the Reason why there are some that do prize the Gospel, and their Hearts are so much upon it. Do not blame them, they find this good in it. They find the Blessing of the Gospel upon them: And therefore though you feel not the sweetness and good that there is in it, and so neglect it; their Souls feel it, and they bless themselves in their God, and bless the Lord that ever they heard of the Gospel. Certainly, There are many Thousands this day in Heaven, Blessing God that ever they heard of the Gospel, because  
of



of the Blessings that they do partake of, by and through the Gospel.

*Object.* You will say, I, but there are many that are the Sons of Peace, and the Entertainers of the Gospel, and yet they do not feel the Blessing of this Peace; they are as much troubled as any are.

*Answer.* To that I answer, They have certainly that which is the Matter for Peace; and their trouble comes for want of Understanding it: Others have Matter for Terror, and their peace comes for want of the knowledge of what Matter for Terror there is. It's true, they have not for the present the full sense of this Blessing of peace, though they have that which will bring it at last. As for Instance, When the blustering Tempestuous Winds do cease, the Waves of the Sea do not presently cease from their tumultuous Working, and Roaring, and Noise, and yet that which was the Cause of their Working, that's gone. So here, Those who Entertain the Gospel, they presently upon the Entertaining of it, have the Tempest over; there is no more Tempest of the Wrath of God against them, but yet there may be some Trouble in their Spirits; but it will be allaid within a while, because that which is the Reason of their Trouble, that certainly is over: And therefore a strong Argument here you have to Entertain this blessed Gospel, that is sent among you. When you hear it Preached, you hear what it brings to you; it brings all the Good that Christ hath purchased with His Blood: This it offers to you. And can the World offer to you as much as this comes to? Can there be any thing to draw your Hearts away from it, that shall be Equal with this Good? Certainly, This is the Peace that is Infinitely above all Earthly things. What would not we do to purchase a good and sure

Peace here in the Kingdom? If we account a firm and sure peace to be so sweet, would not we be willing to lay down our Lives? Certainly, That Man or Woman cannot be accounted to be a good Member of a Common-wealth, that should not be willing to lay down their Lives in such times as these, to purchase a sure and firm peace. But now, here the Gospel preaches to you another manner of Blessing, than this outward Peace: The Gospel holds forth unto you, that peace that was purchased to you by the Blood of the Son of God: It was such a Peace that Christ thought his own Blood not too dear to lay down for the purchase of this peace of the Gospel. It is that Peace that passes all understanding, a Soul peace, an Everlasting peace; and therefore you should come to hear the Gospel, as the great Ordinance of God that is appointed by Him, to bring this Glorious peace unto your Souls. Do not come merely to hear what a Man can say, or to hear the Gifts and Abilities of a Man, or to get a few new Notions, and the like: But when you come to attend upon the Gospel, come, I say, unto it as the great Ordinance that is appointed by God, to bring peace to the Souls of those, that He doth intend Eternal good unto: And this is to come in a right way and manner, to the Preaching of the Gospel. This, I say, is to have a right understanding of what Good there is in the Gospel. And if any of your Souls have had a peace before you have come to a right understanding of the Gospel, know that all that peace is Naught, it will Undo you, you will never have any good by it. You have had peace in your own Spirits a great while, and you bless God that you are not troubled: How came you by that peace which you have had for these many years? You have gone on quietly,

only, and the Terms between God and your Souls, have not troubled you. But I this day, in the Name of God demand of you, How came you to have this Peace? How came God and your Souls to be Friends? This I can tell you, That there was a time that every one of you were Enemies to God. If God hath Revealed any Truth in this Book, this is a certain Truth; That every one in this place, was an Enemy to God. Now then, how you have made up your peace; you had need look to it. Certainly, it must come by the Gospel, or else it is a Delusion: If so be that the Treaties between God and your Souls, were not the Treaties of the Gospel; that is, the Gospel Revealing the great Counsels of God unto you about this, and the Terms upon which He would be Reconciled; and then your Souls sending up your Answer to God, how you would be willing to accept of those Conditions, that are propounded in the Gospel. I put this to your Souls, What Treaties hath there been between God and you? Have you found the Ministry of the Gospel to be powerful upon you, and to bring this Peace into you? If it hath not come in this way, I say it is but a Delusion, and the great Work of Reconciliation between God and your Souls, is to make up at this day.

But thus much for this First Point.

But Secondly, *Your Peace shall rest upon it. Shall rest, Doct. 2* that is, Whosoever Entertains it, they shall not only have some sudden Apprehensions of those Excellent things that you bring unto them, they shall not only have some flashie Comforts in those things, and feel some present Sweetness in them; but the good and the Blessing of that blessed Doctrine of peace, it shall abide with them all the days of their lives, and to all Eternity. That's the meaning,

*Your*

*Your Peace shall rest upon them.* So that this is our Point now, That such as do Entertain the Gospel. Now what the Entertainment is, that is, what it is to be a Son of Peace: That was a great part of our Work, the last Lords Day. But if you be such Sons of Peace as was Opened to you, I say, the Lord will not only grant you present Apprehensions of the Glorious things of the Gospel, and some present Sweetness, but He will Cause the Blessing of it, and the good things of it to abide upon your Spirits, to continue there for your Eternal good. Many upon the first Hearing of the Message of the Gospel, upon the first Opening of that Blessed Doctrine, have their Hearts taken, and begin presently to be stir'd and affected; but we find by Experience, that many times all is but a meer flash, it all vanishes again. The good of the Gospel they did apprehend, doth not abide upon them: As the stony ground, in *Mat. 13. 20, 21.* *But he that received the Seed into stony places, the same is he that beareth the Word, and anon with joy receiveth it: Yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while. He doth but continue a while, he received it in a little way, and that with joy: He hath some present taste of the Sweetness of the Word, he takes it in with joy; but it doth not rest upon him, it doth not abide in him: The Seed doth not lie there so long as to Fructifie, as to bring forth Fruit, but comes to nothing; as the Ears of Corn upon the House top, they quickly are blasted and come to nothing: Thus it is with many Hearers. There were some that were the High-way ground, and they were your ordinary Ignorant and prophane People; the Word took no Impression upon them, but it was presently taken away by the Fowls of the Air. But there were others that did seem to be affected with the Word of*  
the

the Gospel, to have it enter a little into their hearts, their Spirits were taken with sudden Joy. O it is a blessed Gospel that we hear, this is a blessed Ministry indeed that we enjoy: But mark, it was but for a while. The Seed of the Word, it did but abide a little while, it did not rest in them. So in *Luke 14*. There upon the Preaching of Christ, the Text saith in *ver. 15*. *That when one of them that sat at Meit with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat Bread in the Kingdom of God.* When Christ had been Preaching unto them about the things of the Kingdom of God, Mark, There were some of His Auditors, that were taken with His Preaching. O blessed is he that shall have Communion with these things. And yet you may observe by the very Words that follow after, the Parable that Christ uses, that even those that were thus affected and taken, were such as prized their Oxen and Farms, and other things above the Gospel, and have that Doom pronounced upon them, That those men that were bidden, should not taste of the Supper. And so in *John 9. 35*. It is spoken concerning John, *He was a burning and a shining Light, and ye were willing for a season, to rejoyce in his Light.* Mark, John was an admirable Preacher, he came as the Fore-runner of Christ, and Preached, *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.* John did open the Kingdom of Heaven unto his Hearers, and they were mightily taken with him: But now Mark, what the Text saith, *For a little time they did rejoyce in the Light, but they did not continue.* And in *John 8*. There you have a notable place, concerning Christs Preaching unto the Jews, and Christ did Preach so, as did take their Heart in some measure, the Text saith, that some of them did believe, in *ver. 13*. *As He spake those*



those words, many believed on Him. But, Mark, what Christ saith, in ver. 31. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If ye continue in my Word, then are ye My Disciples indeed. Mark, Christ would not own them to be His Disciples, though their Hearts were taken with what He Preached, but upon these Terms, If you continue in my Word. Which is all one, If the Word abide in you, and you abide in the Word, then are you my Disciples. I beseech you observe it: Christ doth not own a Man or Woman to be His Disciple, meerly because of some sudden flashes of Affection, because they are taken with the Word; and perhaps are Convinced by the Word, and stirred for a time: I say, Christ doth not own them to be Disciples, except that His Word abide in them, and they abide in the Word. And in Gal. 4. you have a most excellent Text, for this purpose: The Apostle shews there, that the Galatians were mightily taken with the Ministry of the Gospel at first, when Paul came among them, but it seems in great part it Vanished from them, ver. 15. saith Paul, Where is then the Blessedness you spake of? For I bear you record, that if it had been possible, you would have plucked out your own Eyes, and have given them to me. The meaning is this, When the Gospel came at first to be Preached among them, generally they cried out: O this Blessed Gospel! O the Blessedness! O these blessed Truths that is come among us, such Truths as we were not acquainted withal: O they are blessed Truths indeed. Mark, They were thus taken with the Truths of the Gospel, when they were first Preached: But now, saith Paul, Where is the Blessedness ye spake of? Your Hearts are not now so taken with the Gospel, as they were at first; now you seem to be taken off from it; Where is the Blessedness

sedness you spake of? I make no Question, but many Ministers in many Congregations, have Cause to make Use of these words of the Apostle, when God sent them at first: The Hearts of People were taken with the Ministry of the Gospel, but within a while they are off again. And well may their Ministers say, Where is the Blessedness you spake of? The Peace of the Gospel, it doth not abide upon them, but one thing or other takes it off from them. So in *Heb. 6.* There you read of some, that yet were not Sav'd by the Gospel, or were not in a Condition (at least for the present) to be Sav'd; yet they had a taste of the Heavenly Gift: They did not only hear the Word and understand it, but they *Had a taste of the good Word of God.* O they said, It was the good Word of God. And, Mark, *Of the Powers of the World to come:* That is, of those powerful Truths, of those Truths that do concern the World to come, that were powerful Truths. For so, certainly, my Brethren, the Truths that do concern the World to come, as powerful Truths; they have a mighty deal of Power to work upon the Heart. And these had, not only the Apprehensions, but a taste of the Powers of the World to come; and yet it appears that they had not those things that did accompany Salvation. Many other Scriptures might be shewed, that there are many that are Affected with the Gospel, yea, they are Convinc'd, and they have some taste of it; and their Spirits taken, yea, almost perswaded (with him that we read of) almost perswaded to become a Christian; and yet for all this, this Mercy that is here promised to the Sons of Peace, is not their Portion: the peace of the Gospel doth not rest upon their Spirits. It is a Blessing beyond that which any Hypocrite in the World hath, to have this peace of the

C 6

the Gospel, to rest and abide upon his Spirit. That is, First, To be set up as a constant Light before the Soul, not to come as a meer flash of Lightning, suddenly come, and suddenly gone ; but then it may be said to rest when the Lord sets up those glorious Truths of the Gospel, as a constant Light before the Soul.

And Secondly, When as the Lord works those Truths by Meditation upon the Heart, the Lord causes those Truths to follow the Thoughts of the Mind, and so to work them upon the Heart ; yea, into the Heart of the Thoughts of the Mind, when the Lord gives a constant real Taste of those Truths, and Savour of them ; that though they be not alwayes Hearing of them, yet the Savour and Relish, doth abide in a constant way upon their Hearts, when the Lord causes those Truths of the Gospel to spread all over the Faculties of their Souls : that it is, as the Holy Ghost compares it in Scripture to *Leaven* : *The Kingdom of God is like unto Leaven, which in a little time doth Leaven the whole Lump.* So when the Lord causes the Truths of the Gospel not only to be in the Mind, in the Understanding, in the Conscience, but to get into the Heart ; to get into the Affections, and as it were to Leaven (in a good sense) the whole Soul by the Sweetness, and the Goodness, and the Excellency of those Truths. Yea, when the Lord shall cause those Truths to be dearly Rooted in the Heart, to take such Root as Temptations, and Deceitments, any Provocations without, shall never be able to take out those Truths which are upon the Heart. When the Lord shall cause them to stick so fast, to sink so deep into the Heart, let there come what will to take off the Heart from them, or take them out of the Heart, yet they shall never be able to take them out of the Heart. As a Martyr said, faith he, You may take my Heart

Heart out of my Body, but you shall never take the Belief of these things out of my Heart. O the Blessing, and the Truths of the Gospel did so rest upon his Soul, and they had gotten so near into his Heart, that nothing in the World could take it off. Many People that are a little stirred upon the Hearing of the Gospel, and they think it is good, and the Truths are Blessed Truths, and they had good Resolutions; but perhaps when they come Home from Hearing of the Word, they shall have a Fellow-servant Jeering of them, or the Father or Mother Speaking against them; or the Husband the Wife, or the Wife the Husband, and so perhaps they come to lose all those Truths which formerly they were so taken with: But those that are the *Sons of Peace*, they have the Peace of the Gospel resting upon them, as hath been Opened to you; and this is a very great Blessing of God. O this is a Mercy indeed, for the Lord to grant the Truths of the Gospel, and the Good of it thus to rest upon the Heart; that the Heart doth keep it as a Treasure within it, it is a great Mercy.

First, Because it is a special Fruit of the Covenant of Grace; according to that Text in *Jer. 31.* where God promises as the Fruit of the Covenant, that he will Write His Law in their Inwards parts. Now, certainly, by the *Law*, it is not meant the Letter of the Ten Commandments: But when He saith, *I will Write my Law*, that is, *My Will: The great Counsels of my Will.* And the saving Truths of God are there meant by the *Law*. For when *David* Expresses his love to the *Law*, he means also the Soul-saving Truths, that are Revealed in the Word of God; and certainly there, because it was in the time under the *Law*, the Language of the Holy Ghost was suitable to the Time. But certainly, It is meant in a more especial manner, the Truths of the Gospel:

pel: That look as the Law was Written in *Adam's* Heart at first, so now those that are received into the Covenant, have the Law of the Gospel, and the Truths of that Written in their Hearts: That is, When ever they shall come to hear the Truths of the Gospel Opened to them, they shall find as it were a Counterpain of the blessed Truths of the Gospel in their Hearts.

Yes, further, To have the Word of the Gospel in the Heart, and for the Heart to keep it. It is a very great and close Mercy, a greater Mercy than to have Christ to be Born of the Body of a Woman, in *Luke 11. 27.* *And it came to pass as He spake these things, a certain Woman lift up her voice, and said unto Him, Blessed is the Womb that Bare thee, and the Paps which thou hast Sucked. But He said, Yea, rather blessed are they which hear the Word of God, and keep it.* Those that when they have heard the Word of the Gospel, and shall keep it in their Hearts, and not let it Vanish away from them, but keep it, I say, in their Power and Life upon their Hearts, they are rather Blessed, than the Womb was Blessed that Bare Jesus Christ, or than the Paps were Blessed that gave Jesus Christ Suck. I suppose there is no Woman here but would account her self a blessed Woman, if her Womb had Born Jesus Christ, and if her Paps had given Jesus Christ Suck: Now here is a greater Blessedness than this, for a Woman to hear the Word of the Gospel Preached unto her, and to have this Word of the Gospel to rest in her Heart, and for her to keep it in her heart, in the Power and Life, and Efficacy of it; this Woman now hath a greater Blessing, than if she had Born Jesus Christ in her Womb. Surely, it is a great Blessing to have the blessed things of the Gospel, to be kept in the Soul after the hearing of them.

And



And further, A great Mercy, because there is such a wonderful Power in the good things of the Gospel, and therefore it must needs be a great Mercy to have those things abide upon the Heart. They have such a mighty power to work good upon the Heart, a mighty Convincing power they have, to Convince any Soul in the World. Let a Man or Woman be never so Wicked or Prophane, yet there are such blessed Truth in the Gospel, that is enough to Convince his Soul, I say, though it be never so vile, and to take his Heart. And we have little Cause to fear the working upon the Hearts of People only, if we could but procure this, that those things that we Speak, might but abide upon their Hearts. If we were but sure, that what we Deliver in the Name of God, would but abide upon their Spirits, we need not fear the working upon any Soul Living. Let them be never so Vile; there is such a mighty Power and Efficacy in those blessed things of the Gospel, when they come to be Revealed.

And so there is a mighty Comforting power, to Comfort the Soul with such Consolation, as is infinitely above all Consolation, that ever it was Acquainted withal before.

There is a mighty Power to resist any Temptations, If the Truths of God were but kept in the Soul, we might make little of all Temptations in the World. The Devil could have little hope to prevail with any Temptations, if the Word of the Gospel did but abide upon the Heart of a Man or Woman that doth hear it. This is the advantage that the Devil hath at any time, when one hath been hearing of the Word; if he know that the Word is past from them, and it doth not abide, then he can come with Temptations, and makes no question of

of prevailing. But if the Devil knows that those Truths do abide and rest upon the Soul, the Devil can have little hope to prevail: *The Peace of God shall keep your Hearts, Fro Rest, shall Guard your Hearts.* It shall be as a Troop of Horse, to keep you from Temptations, from the power and strength of Temptations. You complain, and say, O that you would do better, but Temptations are so strong, that they prevail upon you. Why are Temptations so strong? It is because thy Soul is not acquainted with the Blessed and Glorious things of the Gospel; and the Power and Life of them doth not abide upon thy Spirit.

And likewise, the Truths of the Gospel: O they have a mighty deal of Power to cleanse your Hearts, *1 Pet. 2. 20.* There you have mentioned the Power of the Knowledge of the Gospel, when it abides in one that might be an Hypocrite, and therefore not of that Efficacie that the true saving Knowledge is. Yet Observe, what is said there, *For if after they have escaped the Pollutions of the World, through the Knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* Now then, If that Knowledge have such a cleansing Power, O what Power then hath the true saving Power of the great things of the Gospel, and the Glorious things of it, to Cleanse the Heart.

Yea, If those Truths do abide upon the Spirits, they have a Transforming power, they have a power to change the Heart into the same likeness: According to that Scripture, *2 Cor. 3. 18.* *But we all, with open face beholding as in a Glass, the Glory of the Lord are changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* Now this Gospel of the Lord, is nothing else but the good things of the Gospel: We behold them,

them, and that as with open Face, as we do behold the Gospel of the Lord. And what then? *We are changed into the same Image.* Oh! this is a Blessed abiding, it is a Blessed thing for the things of the Gospel to rest upon the Soul. Why? Because they have such a Power in them to Change the Heart, to Transform the Heart into the very Image of them, and the Truths of the Gospel have the clearest Image of God upon them; the Glory of God is Imprinted upon the Truths of the Gospel. Now that these should rest upon the Spirit, it must needs be a great Mercy.

Another is this. It is that which makes them indeed to be Savings. All those Blessed things of the Gospel that are Revealed, they never come to be Saying, until they come to rest upon the Soul; to be got into the Heart, and there to dwell and rest. Mark that Scripture, in *James 1. 21. Wherefore lay a part all Filthiness, and Superfluity of Naughtiness, and receive with Meekness the Ingrafted Word, which is able to save your Souls.* Mark, Receive with Meekness the Word. But how? The Ingrafted Word, which is able to save your Souls. The Word of God can never save your Souls, till it comes to be an Ingrafted Word. Now these things I premise, to show you the Excellency of this, that so I might have the more ground for an Exhortation by and by. To labour to keep the Word of God, I mean those Truths of the Gospel that at any time comes to be discovered to you.

Now by way of application, as before is may be. *First,* In the First place, Hence we see cause, the Ministers of the Gospel especially, see cause bitterly to lament the want of this in their Auditory ordinarily. It's true, There are few that are faithful Preachers of the

Appl.

the

the Gospel, but they do find that God doth at sometime or other Convice Men, and somewhat stir their Hearts: O, but this is that that they have cause bitterly to complain of, that those things that they deliver to them, that are the Precious and Glorious things of Jesus Christ, yet though they stir them a little for the while, yet they do not rest upon them. It was a Complaint of *Chrysostom*, saith he, We Ministers are in a worse Condition than any Work-men whatsoever. Take a Carpenter, he comes and works, and leaves his Work over-night, and comes the next day and finds it where it was as he left it; his Work is no more forward, neither backward. Oh! But it is not so with us Preachers, for we come and work upon the Hearts of People, and we bring it into a reasonable good forwardness, and we leave it one Night and come the next day; but woe to us, we find it not where we leave it: We work upon their Hearts one Lords Day, and it may be they go away with some Resolutions, that they will break off their evil way, and they will attend to the Ministry of the Word; but before the next Lords Day, they are quite off again: They are got again into some wicked Company or other, and they begin to harden their Hearts against those Blessed Truths; so that our Condition is worse than any Work-man whatsoever. But though it be a sad Condition for the Ministers of the Gospel, yet know it is a sadder Condition for your selves: You that heretofore have heard those Blessed things of the Gospel, and your Hearts have been taken with them, have they rested upon you? I put this to you in the Name of God, I say, Had the Peace of the Gospel rested upon your Hearts? It may be some of you may know Two or Three years ago, God began to work upon you, you began to have some Enlightning of

Jesus

Jesus Christ, and of the Kingdom of God; and you began to say, Blessed are those that shall be partakers of those things, but have these rested upon you. Hath not the Ministry of the Gospel been to some of you like a Ship, that when it is Sailing in the Water, it makes a great Impression for the present, but let the Ship be gone and the Water is as smooth as ever it was? So many times, when the Minister comes and opens the Blessed Truths of the Gospel, they make a mighty Dent upon the Hearts of their Auditors; but within a little while their Hearts are like the Water: no man can see that ever there was an Impression of any Truth upon their Hearts. Now know that this is a very sad thing to have the Gospel begin to Affect the Heart, but not to Rest.

First, Consider, How vile is thy heart, it is an argument of strong corruption that is in thy heart that the things of the Gospel cannot stick there.

And Consider, How vild it is, that wicked thoughts, vile base, unworthy, unclean, filthy thoughts can abide upon you. If the Devil dart in temptations they will abide and rest, why when he darts them in over-night, he can find them in the morning; perhaps if you have some vain or unclean thoughts, you can role them up and down in your mind for half a night together; perhaps day after day, and night after night, base and filthy thoughts are rol'd up and down in your Spirits; these things can abide. Now what shall vile, filthy, ungodly thoughts rest in your hearts and shall not the Blessed and Glorious Truths of Jesus Christ and the things of the Kingdom of God rest upon your hearts?

Yea, Consider further, That it is a most dangerous thing  
D d



thing for an essay of mercy to pass away and to do no good, for mercy to come and as it were make a trial upon the heart, and then leave it and no good done; this is a sad condition: It is not so dangerous while Men and Women are in such an estate as the mercy of God hath not made an essay as it were upon them. But now, When the Grace of the Gospel shall come to make an essay upon the heart, to make as it were a tryal upon the heart and to have the repulse, this is a dangerous thing; for an offer of Gods Grace to be rejected is very sad, to loose one opportunity of Gods Mercy is a very sad thing; how dost thou know that ever they will come upon thy heart with that power that once they did, and therefore thy condition is very sad.

And know further, That when the Lord begins to reveal to thee the things of the Gospel, and thou puttest them off; those flashes of affection and conviction that thou hast had will prove to be matter of terror of conscience another day.

Some poor Soul may say, Then Lord what shall become of me; God knows this is my condition; I come many times to hear the word and I meet with those truths that do mightily take my heart for the present, but the Lord knows all vanishes again: I think I could remember every thing that the Minister speaks while I am hearing of them, but they go out again; I hear that this is the Blessing of God upon the Sons of Peace, that the Truths of the Gospel should abide upon their hearts and rest there; O they do not rest with me: Now and then they come to me, but they do not rest with me.

Now for the Answer to this, Perhaps they may not rest in thy memory, but yet if the Fruit and Effect of them doth

doth rest in thy heart, thou hast the Gospel resting in thy heart. As thus, Why perhaps the Water may pass through a Vessel, go quite through it and not stay; I, but yet there is so much Fruit of the passage of it thorow, as to keep the Vessel sweet: Though you cannot take up any Water from it, but it is all gone; yet I say it keeps the Vessel sweet: So I may say to those that have the weakest memories, and yet the Lord hath wrought any degree of Grace, though thy memory be so weak that thou canst not remember (I speak this to those that have weak memories naturally) and there is nothing that their Souls do more desire then this; O that they might keep those things that they hear, they would think themselves the most happy Creatures in the world; if those truths that sometimes they hear might rest upon them: I speak to those. Is it so with thy heart? Then though thou canst not remember, yet if those truths keep thy heart sweet, they keep thy heart from filthy lusts that they do not abide in thy heart, thy heart is kept savory by them; if there be this effect abiding upon thy heart to keep it savory and sweet, this Peace of the Gospel may rest with thee though thou canst not remember particulars. A Man or Woman perhaps they cannot remember what Meat they ate a little while since, but they find themselves nourished by that Meat. So for the word of God, that is the food of thy Soul, though thou canst not remember and give an account of such and such things thou do'st hear in the word, but yet do'st thou find that thou art nourished by it; I say, the good things of the Gospel then do rest upon thy Soul.

Then if this be so great a Blessing, O that I could but convince you this day to go away with your hearts taken with this Blessing; O that all of you were convinc'd

this day. We hear that it is not enough for us to have sudden apprehensions, when we hear the Blessed things of the Gospel; but that that is indeed the blessing of God upon a Son of Peace, it is to have the good things of the Gospel abide and rest upon them. O then, that it might be so with us! O that the Lord would help us, that whatsoever we hear, we may not only be taken with the hearing of it, but that it might rest upon our Hearts. I shall propound some Rules unto you.

*First*, When you come, you must endeavour to bring soft Hearts, and tender Spirits: What Truths you do know, you must work upon your Hearts before you come, to labour to soften your Hearts. We know that the Truths of God are compared in Scripture to Nails, that are fastened by the Ministers of God in the Assemblies, *Eccles. 12. 11.* Now when you come to fasten a Nail or a Goad, if the thing be a Stone, you cannot fasten it: A Work-man if he would drive a Nail into a Wall, if he meet with a Flint, the Nail cannot enter, but there must be some thing that must yield to make it rest: So you must labour to bring yielding and soft Hearts.

*Secondly*, When you come to hear, come so as to make account that now you come to attend upon God, and that while any Truth of the Gospel is Revealing to you, God is coming nigh unto your Souls, in those things that concern your Eternal good. If the Hearts of People did attend upon the Ministry of the Gospel thus, that is, We are here, O Lord, in thy Presence now, to hear what Thou hast to Reveal unto us; and we believe that in this thine Ordinance, when Thou art making known any Truth of the Gospel to us, Thou art coming nigh to our Souls in a matter that Concerns our Eternal good. If you did attend thus, certainly every Truth would get into your Hearts.

*Thirdly*,

*Thirdly*, When you find the Truth beginning to work upon your Hearts, then Dart up some Ejaculations in your own Thoughts : Lord, set home this. So you may do, and not hinder your hearing : Lord, Thou beginnest to stir my Heart, O Lord, keep my Heart in this frame. As we read of *David*, when as he saw the People in a good Frame, *1 Chron.* 29. 18. saith he, O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel our Fathers, keep this for ever in the Imagination of the Thoughts of the Heart of thy People. And the truth is, We would willingly Dart up such a Prayer to God, if we knew how God did begin to stir you : But you know how God is communing with your Hearts, when you hear us speaking to you, therefore do you your selves Dart up such an Ejaculation to God : O Lord God, keep this Truth in the Thoughts of my Heart for ever.

A *Fourth Rule* is this, You must not trust your own Hearts, never trust to sudden Affections and Resolutions. This Text is most excellent for this purpose, Mark how *David* Prays, *Keep this in the Thoughts of the Heart of thy People, and prepare their Hearts unto Thee.* Why were they not prepared to God ? Their Hearts were mightily up for God, and yet it appears that *David* would not take this scaree for a Preparation, but the Lord must still work further and further. So when thou feelest thy Heart a little stirr'd, do not think that the work is presently done, but pray to God to prepare thy Heart, and that He would go on with that Blessed work of His.

And then another Rule is this, Labour after thou art gone, to work the Truths upon thy Heart by Meditation, that so they may abide. Would you have a Salve that should do good to an Affected Member ? It is not  
only

only the laying of the Salve upon the Body, but to rub it that it may get in and supple the part. So when the Lord comes to present the Blessed Truths of the Gospel to you, you must labour to rub them upon your Hearts by Meditation.

Another Rule is, Turn all that you hear into Prayer: That is, When you have heard any truth that hath taken and affected your Souls, get alone into your Closets, and before you go about any other Business, fall down before the Lord, and turn that which you have heard into Prayer; it were a good Rule for your Direction, and you will find an admirable benefit by this, you will find this to help your Memory much. Do but henceforward observe this Rule that now is tendered unto you as from the Lord, work the matter that you hear upon your Hearts by Prayer.

And further, Take heed of Temptations, keep a narrow Watch over your Hearts, take heed that some Temptations do not come secretly to steal away that blessed Truth that you have heard: For the Devil will labour, as I told you, the place is full of Angels, and so it is full of Devils too: The Devil is watching who it is that is stirred with the hearing of the Gospel, and he presently is labouring to draw out all the Power and Efficacy: Therefore watch against Temptations.

Another Rule will be this, Often call your Hearts unto an account, oftentimes be communing with your own Hearts in this manner: O my Soul, was there not such a time that thou wert stirr'd and affected, when thou did'st hear such and such things? Why what is become of all thy Stirrings, and of all those Resolutions and Truths, that thou hast heard? O my Soul, where are they? What hast thou done with them? O, it would



be of admirable Use, if you would take an account of your hearts.

But when Men and Women are stirr'd sometimes, and go away and never call their Hearts to an account what is become of them; no marvel though the things of the Gospel do not abide, but vanish all, and are as Water spilt upon the Ground.

And further, Take heed of secret sins: Thou hast no power to purge thy Heart, but thou may'st in great measure abandon the Acts of sin. That Man or Woman that lives in a Secret sin, I say, that Secret sin will either Eat out the Truths that he hath heard, or the Truth will Eat out that sin. Thou comest to hear the Word, and hast many Blessed things Revealed to thee, I say, they will either Eat out thy Secret sin, or thy Secret sin will Eat out them: And which of the two do'st thou think, thou hadst best be rid of?

And if thou wouldst have them abide, turn all into Practice; that is, fall a Doing: Do not content thy self with Affections and Resolutions, but fall a Doing; and that doth mightily settle the Truth, when it comes once to be Practised. As now in a Temptation, the Temptation is not settled until the Devil hath got something done according to the Temptation; and when something is done, then the Temptation settles. So concerning the Truths of the Gospel, a Man it may be hath some Resolutions and Desires, but till there be somewhat done, some Duties set upon, some Reformation in thy Way and Life, the Truth doth not settle; but the doing somewhat according to what thou do'st hear, that doth mightily settle the Truth upon thy Soul. O think thus, There is such and such a thing made known to me; O, it may do my Soul good for ever:  
And

And if you did but keep those things that you hear, they would do your Souls good; they would do your Souls good in time of Affliction: If the Truths of the Gospel did rest upon your Hearts, they would Comfort you then. So it was with *David, I had perished in mine Affliction, but thy Word did Comfort me.* So if you would lay up that which you hear, when you come upon your Sick-beds, or in any Trouble, it would mightily help you and comfort you. O these Truths of the Gospel, would be very good Companions when you are in your Journey, or in your Business, they would Commune with your Hearts: And, O what Comfort would they be unto your Souls? So we read in *Prov. 6. 21. Bind them continually upon thine Heart.* So I may say, What Truths of the Gospel you hear, bind them continually upon thy Heart, and about thy Neck; when thou goest it shall Lead thee, when thou sleepest it shall Keep thee, and when thou awakest it shall Talk with thee: When you awake in the Night season, you Toss up and down upon your Beds, and know not what to think upon; but had you kept the Truths of the Gospel, they would Talk with you, yea, you might Converse with Jesus Christ even as you lie in your Beds.

And if they did rest in your Hearts, then when Death did come they would be Comfortable, then they will be sweet one day. Ask a Dying Soul, what Peace with God is worth? How many have lain upon their Sick and Death-Beds, and then remembred, O the sweet Truths that once I heard, I would give a Thousand Worlds I had them again. O that they did but come now at this time to my Heart, with as great a power as they did at such a time. Now that you might have those Blessed things of the Gospel to Comfort your Hearts, keep them now.

And

• And besides, They will be a Means to make you to be very useful to others. What's the Reason why Men and Women, when they go to Visit their Sick Neighbours, they are so Barren in their Conference, they say, How do you? And God comfort you; and so: I, but what have you of the Doctrine of Reconciliation with God, and the way of Attonement with God? What have you to help their troubled Consciences, and to pacifie them? Can you bring unto them any Truths you have heard? You have Liv'd under the Ministry of the Gospel a long time, what is become of them? If you had been a Child of Peace, then you would have been able to have carried these things unto your Sick Neighbours, and to have done a great deal of good unto them. But alas, You go with a barren Heart, and carry nothing at all: And why? Because the Truths of the Gospel have not abode with you. O how full should our Hearts be with Jesus Christ, if but one Truth, every Sermon we heard, did rest in our Hearts.

• And take but this one Meditation along with you, the Blessed things of the Peace of the Gospel are such, as if ever I be Say'd, I must be Praising of the Name of God for unto all Eternity. Now shall I not Labour that they should rest upon my Heart here, seeing they must be the Matter that I must Bless the Name of God everlastingly for.

• And thus (though I have past some things over) you have had the Substance of what I intended to Speak of: And that is, That those that are the *Sons of Peace*, have this Blessing upon them: They have not only the sudden apprehensions and flashes of Affection, in being moved with the Glorious things of the Gospel, but all the good things of the Gospel abides and rest upon them.

# Sermon IV.

Luke 10. 6.

*Your Peace shall rest upon it, &c.*

Dof. 3.

**T**HE Third Note from the Blessing that here the Entertainers of the Gospel shall have, is this: That where there is but any one in a Place, or in a Family, that shall Entertain the Gospel, the whole Family shall be the better for that one. And the Note is Raised from this Particle, *It: Your Peace shall rest upon it.* He doth not say, Your Peace shall rest upon him only, though that's true, It shall rest upon him principally: But he saith, *Your Peace shall rest upon it:* That is, If a Son of Peace be in the Family, your Peace shall rest upon the Family; that is, there shall be some good come unto the Family, by reason of any one Son of Peace that's there: If there be but one that doth Entertain the Gospel, the Family may come to have a Blessing by that. If it be but a poor Servant, or poor Child that shall receive the Gospel, there may come a great deal of good to the Family by such a Servant; but if it be a Governour of the Family, then the Blessing will be more. For we find in the Gospel often where the

the Governour of the Family Believed, it is said, that the whole Household did believe and were Baptized. And we find often in the Gospel of Believing Families, and indeed there is a greater Blessing of God upon a Family, where the Governours are Believers, than we are aware of: A Blessing, I say, upon the Family: That let there be any Governour, or any that is a Son of Peace, the Family is the better for it; God many times will spare them the rather, because of them. In Isa. 65. 8. *Thus saith the Lord, as the new Wine is found in the Cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not, for a Blessing is in it: So will I do for my servants sake, that I may not Destroy them all.* Many times in a place where there are a great many Ungodly ones, yet if there be but a few that are Godly, as the new Wine in the Cluster, the Lord saith, *Destroy it not, for a Blessing is in it.* There are some good Grapes there, though a great many Rotten ones; and a Blessing is in it, and therefore Destroy it not: So saith God many times of a Family, where there are some good ones, *Destroy it not,* saith God, for a Blessing is in this Family. It is very observable, that which we read concerning the House of Jeroboam, I Kings 14. 10. compared with ver. 13. In ver. 10. There the Lord Threatens, that He will bring Evil upon the House of Jeroboam, and will Cut off from Jeroboam, &c. Well, but this must not come presently, the Lord would not presently bring the Evil upon them; but He would stay till He had taken away one out of the Family, ver. 12, 13. *Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine own House; and when thy feet enter into the City, the Child shall die. And all Israel shall Mourn for him and Bury him: For he only of Jeroboam shall come to the Grave, because in him is found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel; it*



*the House of Jeroboam.* Mark, How God takes notice of any in a wicked Family: If there be but any one; a Child, that hath some good thing in it; because but *some good thing*, the Lord takes special Notice of such a one in the Family. Therefore, though his House should be Destroyed, yet this Child must be taken away first, *Because in him there is found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel.* Mark, It is but *some good thing*, and towards the Lord God of Israel, and a Child; but this was in the House of Jeroboam. Let there be but a Child that hath some good thing in a wicked Family, the Lord takes special Notice of it, and there may come a Blessing upon the Family, even for the sake of such a one.

*Reasf.*

The Reason of it is, Because if there be any in a Family that Entertains the Gospel, there the Lord hath the Glory of His Name, that He doth most rejoyce in. It cannot but please the Lord to have the Glory of His Name to be owned in a Family, and held forth: And if there be but any one in a Family that shall Entertain the Gospel, who knows what good such a one may do. If there be one in a Family to hold forth Christ, here is a Way and Means to draw others, to the Love of Christ. If God Convert the Husband, he may draw the Wife; or if God Convert the Wife, she may draw the Husband, 1 Cor. 7. 16. *For what knowest thou, O Wife, whether thou shalt save thy Husband? Or how knowest thou, O Man, whether thou shalt save thy Wife?* It is spoken in the Case of Unbelievers, where one was an Unbeliever, and the other God had Converted: And in that Case, the Question was, Whether they were to stay one with another, one being an Infidel, and the other a Believer? Yea, saith the Apostle, *For what knowest thou, O Wife, whether*

*whether thou shalt save thy Husband? Or thou, O Husband, whether thou shalt save thy Wife? And so, I say, What knowest thou, O Child, whether thou mayest save thy Brother, or Sister? Or thou, O Servant, whether thou mayest save thy Fellow-Servant? And if thou be so, then how vile are they that shall Malign and Oppose, Scorn and Contemn, any in a Family, when God doth begin to work any good upon them? We know it is ordinary, That if the Lord begins to strike one Soul in a Family, the Child, or the Servant, with some Work of His Spirit, that they begin to Inquire after the things of God, and to Entertain the things of the Gospel, his Brother will scorn him, or Sister, or Fellow-Servant will deride him: Perhaps his Master that Lov'd him before, will now Hate him, and be ready upon all occasions to shew Displeasure against him. Yea, perhaps the very Father, out of whose Loyns the poor Child comes, will deride him: What shall we have of you now? O, you are grown so Precise, that now you will be Spoil'd, and good for nothing: And so perhaps the Mother, out of whose Womb it came, will now Hate it. But, O thou wretched Parent, thou shouldest rather Bless God, that God begins to work in thy Family, that He begins to work upon one that came out of thy Loyns; for thou do'st not know, but that this Child may do thy Soul good. Thou wert the means for the Natural life of it, who knows but God intends to make this Child to be a means for thy Eternal Life. And so wretched Master and Mistress in a Family, that shall less regard a Servant when God begins to work upon their Hearts, than you did before. And you, whom God is pleased to begin to Reveal the Blessed things of the Gospel to, and to give your Hearts to Entertain them, and yet you*  
Live

Live in wicked Families: Do you Labour to be Blessings to the Family: Improve what God hath given you, for the good of the Family: And do you Walk so, as to manifest the Power of the Gospel, that your Souls doth Entertain, that you may Live convincingly in the Family where you Live? And though they do Hate and Scorn you for the present, yet with your humble Walking, they may be forced to say, Verily God is Working upon this Servant, and God is Working upon this Child. It should be the Care of Children, or Servants, or Wives, or Husbands, that live among such as are Wicked, when God begins to Work upon them, they must be very careful to hold forth the Glory, and Beauty of the Gospel in their Lives, to Convince those that they Live withal. And you that are in such a Family, if God doth begin to stir any in the Family, do you Improve them to the uttermost you can: And howsoever you may think there is little in it, yet when God begins to stir the Heart of one, Salvation may be come to the House; and the Lord doth expect that you should Improve that Work of His upon your own Hearts; or otherwise your Consciences will Terrifie you another day: O, I saw God working upon my Fellow-Servant, or Brother, or Sister, but I neglected it, otherwise my Soul might have had good. And so much for that Note: *If the Son of Peace be there, your Peace shall rest upon it: That is, upon the Family.*

The last Note is, *For, saith Christ, and into whatsoever House, or City you enter, do thus and thus: And if the Son of Peace be there, your Peace shall rest upon it.* That is, You shall be made an Instrument of good unto them, so as to bring the glorious Peace of the Gospel unto them. From whence the Note is this: *For every one that*

That

That it is a great Encouragement to the Ministers of the Gospel, to think what abundance of good they may do, if God shall be pleased to Bless their Ministry. Christ did foretel both His Disciples and Apostles, that they were like to have hard Work of it, in the Carrying of His Name abroad in the World: But for their Encouragement, He tells them this; *Go your way and Preach, and if there be any Son of Peace, your Peace shall rest upon it.* As if He should say, You shall be made a glorious Instrument of doing good unto them, and let this be your Encouragement: And, indeed, it is a great Encouragement for any Minister of God, to Venture his very Life, and to do or Suffer any thing in the World; though but upon this Supposition, That if God shall be pleased but to Bless my Ministry, then the Lord shall make me an Instrument to bring Peace to that place, even Peace between God and their Souls; to be the Means to Convey all the good unto them, that Jesus Christ hath Purchased by His Blood. This seem'd to be the Encouragement that God gave to *Jeremiah*, in Chap. 36. And that was in another kind, *Jeremiah* was to go and reveal the Threats of God; but Mark what his Encouragement was, in ver. 3. *It may be that the House of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them, that they may return every man from his evil way, that I may forgive their Iniquity and their Sin.* Saith the Lord to *Jeremiah*, Go about this Work, though it be a hard Work, and let this be your Encouragement: *It may be: Though but upon a may be; The House of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them, that they may return every man from his evil way, that I may forgive their Iniquity and their Sin.*

Now if this were *Jeremiah's* Encouragement, surely a greater

greater Encouragement it is for a Minister to go and Preach the Gospel upon a meer *May be*; that there are some that shall Entertain the Gospel. And we find it was Paul's Encouragement, in divers Scriptures as I might shew you, but that's most Notable, in 2 Tim.

1. 10. *But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath Abolished Death, and hath brought Life and Immortality to Light through the Gospel: Whereunto I am appointed a Preacher, and an Apostle, and a Teacher of the Gentiles.* Mark, saith He, The Gospel reveals Jesus Christ, who hath Abolished Death, and hath brought Life and Immortality to light: And, saith he, God hath appointed me to be a Teacher of this, *For the which Cause, I also suffer these things.* I am content to go on in this Work of the Gospel whatsoever I suffer. What, Is this the Errand that I am sent about, to go and Preach the Gospel, that brings Life and Immortality to light? Let me Suffer what can be, I am content to go on in this Work: O, It is a glorious Errand that I am sent about! If it please God I speed but upon one Soul, O, it were worth my Life. So the excellent Fruit that should come upon the Entertainment of the Gospel, is here given to these Disciples for their Encouragement in the Ministry. Now what is it that should Encourage the Heart of a Minister in his Work, more than these Three things.

First, That he shall be an Instrument to glorifie God. Secondly, An Instrument to do good to Souls. Thirdly, He shall have a Crown of Glory so much the more. These Three things are the greatest Encouragements in the World, to any gracious Heart.

First, That he shall be an Instrument of the Glory of God. For one to live to be Instrumental of the Glory of God,



God must needs make his Life comfortable, whatsoever he suffer. Now there can be no such Glory that any Creature can be made a greater Instrument of, than the Glory that God hath from Souls that are Sav'd by Jesus Christ. It is the highest Glory that God hath from all His Creatures, that there should be some Souls that should understand Jesus Christ, that should admire at Him, should glorifie God in Jesus Christ. It is the highest Glory that God doth Injoy in Heaven, next unto the Glory that He hath in Himself, and in His Son; that is, in the Trinity: But for the Glory that He hath, *Ab extra*, from His Creatures, that is the highest Glory that ever God had, or shall have. Now for the Lord to make a Man to be an Instrument of this, To bring some Souls to be Eternally Glorifying God for Jesus Christ: O, It is worth all a Mans Strength, though he should shorten his Life Seven Years; yet if there be but One or Two Souls brought by his Ministry, that shall Injoy the good things in Christ, this is well worth the Labour and Pains. For, indeed, in this the Lord doth honour Men more than Angels: The Lord hath not put the Angels in Heaven, upon such an Honourable work as this, to be the Embassadors of God and Christ, for Reconciliation: The Lord hath not committed the Word of Reconciliation to Angels, to go and Preach that in an Ordinary way: They are not Deputed by Christ, to be as His Officers. We never read of any such thing in the Word of God, though they be sometimes Appointed to be Ministring Spirits for the good of Gods Elect, to Help them, to Comfort them, to Avenge them of their Enemies; but we never read that the Word of Reconciliation was Committed to them, and to the Ministers of the Gospel: And therefore there is no such Glory that they

can bring to God, as the Lord is Pleas'd to make Man to be an Instrument of. In this the Lord doth Honour Man more than the Angels, that he shall be Appointed to be the great Ordinance under Jesus Christ, for the bringing of Souls unto Jesus Christ; and so the bringing of them to Magnifie the Infinite Riches of the Grace of God in Christ, to all Eternity. Now, Is not this worth any ones Labour and Life? O what Encouragement is this, whatsoever one suffers in it.

Secondly, Can there be next unto this, a greater Encouragement, than to be an Instrument of good to our Brethren, of good to Mankind? Those are the most happy Men in the World; that are the most Useful for Mankind, that the Lord shall be Pleas'd to make Use of, for the good of Mankind; and therefore it should Teach all to be as Serviceable as they can to others. For the Happiness and the true Comfort of a Mans Life, it doth not depend in this, That he can get an Estate, and go Brave and Fine, and Eat and Drink of the best; but it is in this, That the Lord will make him useful in his place, an Instrument of good to others. It is a very Comfortable thing for any, that are Chief in a place where they Live, that the Lord makes them Instruments of the Civil good of the places where they are: Of the good of the People for their Bodies, to keep them in Peace and Order: But to be Appointed by God to be an Instrument of Soul-good, of Eternal good; this is a higher Privilege that God doth grant in His Mercy to some. And it might be a mighty Encouragement, the Considering of this. What saith Saint James, speaking to Christians to Encourage them to Labour to do good to their Brethren: *Brethren, If any of you do erre from the Truth, and one convert him, Let him know that he*  
which

which Converteth a sinner from the Error of his Way, shall save a Soul from Death, and shall hide a multitude of sins. Let him know, saith he, that he that Converteth a sinner from the Error of his Way, Let him know: What shall he know? That he shall save a Soul from Death, and shall hide a multitude of sins. Though it may be, he takes a great deal of Pains, and suffers much in it; yet for his Encouragement, Let him know that he shall save a Soul, and hide a multitude of sins.

Further, If the other should not be a sufficient Encouragement, yet for his own good; many times there is much Self in the hearts of the best Ministers. Now there is these Two things that cannot but follow, if the Lord Bless their Ministry, to bring the Peace of the Gospel to any Soul.

First, Such a Soul will Bless God for him. Now for a man to be so in the Hearts of the Saints of God, as that he should have them Bless the Lord for him, and Bless the time that ever he saw him: Blessed be the Lord, and Blessed be thou; as David said to Abigail, when it did but hinder him in one sin by her Counsel. But now, if so be the Lord doth Bless the Ministry of the Gospel to any, so that the Peace of Jesus Christ comes to the Soul, there is not the hinderance of one sin, but of multitudes; and there is the obtaining of the Pardon of all sins: And therefore how much more Cause have they to say, Blessed be God, and Blessed be thou, and Blessed be thy Counsel, and Blessed be thy Ministry. Here's a great Encouragement in this. They through whose Ministry Souls comes to be Blessed, they will Bless them, and Bless God for them.

And further, At the great Day of Jesus Christ, they shall have abundance of Joy in those that God made them Instrumental of good unto. In Phil. 2. you have

a Notable Text for that, saith the Apostle, in way of Exhortation to the *Philippians*, to hold forth the Word of Life, in ver. 16. *Holding forth the Word of Life, that I may rejoyce in the Day of Christ; that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain:* Saith he, If you do thus and thus, and shew forth the Power of the Grace of God, that God hath been pleased to Bless my Ministry. If you do so, why then I shall rejoyce. O, do you shew forth the Power and Efficacy of the Ministry of the Gospel, of that Ministry of mine upon you: Why? That I may rejoyce in the Day of Christ; that I have not Run in vain, neither Laboured in vain: So that where the Ministry of the Gospel is Blessed to any People, these those Ministers being Faithful themselves, shall rejoyce in the Day of Jesus Christ, that they have not Run in vain.

Therefore to Wind this up, It should be one strong Motive to People, to Embrace the Ministry of the Gospel, even for the Encouragement of those whom the Lord doth send among them, that they may be willing to draw forth their Hearts, and to venture their Lives among them. As, certainly, not one Man of Forty, of a Hundred scarce, that should Preach to such a Congregation as this, but must expect a Venturing of his Life in it. But let this Message be but Entertain'd, it will be thought to be thoroughly Recompensed. For it will be a Joy to those that do Venture themselves among you: It will be a Joy in the Day of Jesus Christ, that they have not Run in vain. But we leave that Point, and come to the last Part of the Text.

*If the Son of Peace be thine, your Peace shall rest upon you. But what if not? If not, it shall turn to you again.* O,

O, that this should be heard, *If not*: This is a sad Supposition indeed, *If not*. What shall the Lord send Embassadors of Peace? The Lord from Heaven send to His poor Creatures the Ministry of His Gospel, and offer Peace between their Souls and Himself, Purchased by the Blood of His Son: And shall it be said, *If not*? If there be any that will not Imbrace it? Is it possible that Jesus Christ, wheresoever He comes, should not be Entertain'd? Truly, this very Supposition that there should be a Possibility for any Soul to whom Christ is Revealed, ever to reject; doth Argue the extream sinfulness of the Hearts of Men. O, Woe to us that such a thing should be supposed as possible, *If not*: That Christ should come to any place and should not be Entertain'd: What, that the Ministry of the Gospel should come and be Rejected, when as it is nothing else but the bringing of the Message of Peace to a People, between God and them. They may think, perhaps, that it comes to trouble them: But the Truth is, The Errand of all the Ministers of the Gospel among People, it is no other in the Conclusion, and in the Issue, but to bring Eternal Peace to their Souls: And shall this be Rejected? Sometimes it is so. Now in this we have these Three things.

First, A sad Supposition, that sometimes the Ministry of the Gospel comes where it is rejected by some.

Secondly, The Encouragement of Ministers in this Case: Christ doth not only Encourage them in case their Ministry prevails, that then they shall be Instruments of so much good to Souls; but He doth Encourage them in case it doth not prevail. As if the Disciples should say, I indeed, If our Ministry prevails that we may bring Peace to Souls, we have enough: But what if not? *It shall return to you again.*

And



And then, Thirdly, A dreadful Denunciation against all those that do not Entertain the Gospel: And that is, That they shall have no Benefit of the Peace of the Gospel: That the Ministry of the Gospel shall be taken from them, and that God will be very Quick in His dealings with them.

Now then at this time for the First.

*First, If not:* This sad Supposition. From hence the Point of Doctrine, or Note of Observation, is this:

*Doff.*

That the Gospel doth sometimes go to places, the Ministry of the Gospel is sometimes sent to places where it is rejected by Men: As before, *If the Son of Peace*, that supposes that where God doth send the Gospel, there are some Sons of Peace. So, *If not*; here's a Supposition that the Ministry of the Gospel, may be sent to a place, and yet there may be some that will reject this blessed Ministry. You know what is said of Christ himself, And well then may it be said of them he sends to Preach: *When Christ Himself came to his own* John 1. *his own received him not: His own*, Those that he had a peculiar right in, the People of the Jews; even such as were the only people that did profess the true God upon the face of the Earth: I beseech you observe it; When Jesus Christ came into the World, there was but a handful of people upon the face of the Earth, that did so much as profess the worship of the true God; but the generality of all the world, except a little Country of *Canaan*, that was a matter of Fourscore Miles one way, and but a very little another way; except that little Country, there was none upon the face of the Earth but worshipped the Devil; went according to the Imaginations of their own hearts, did not so much as acknowledge God in his worship; onely I say, there was a little handful of people

people in *Canaan*, and they were the children of *Abraham*, and Christ came to them; they were his own; you would think surely if Christ comes to them, seeing all the World else are Idolaters, they will entertain him. No, when Christ came Himself, the Blessed Son of God taking our nature upon him, who was the Brightness of the Glory of his Father; yet his own did not receive him. And we find it said directly, that Christ in his Ministry, in *Luke 2*. should be for a Stumbling-block to many, in *ver. 34*. *And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his Mother, Behold, this Child is set for the Fall and Rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against.* You have little cause therefore to be Discouraged, because you are spoken against. And we find that Christ Himself Preaching what poor Entertainment He had, no Marvel then, if this Supposition be concerning His Disciples: *If not.* It may possibly be, that some will not receive your Ministry? Do but observe what Entertainment Christ Himself had sometimes, when He went to Preach Himself, in *Luke 4. 29*. You have there the History of a most Excellent Sermon, that Jesus Christ Preached; and when He had done His Sermon, do but see what requital He had, as soon as He had done, the Text saith, *And all they in the Synagogue when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust him out of the City, and led him unto the brow of the Hill (whereon their City was built) that they might cast him down headlong.* They sought to break his neck as soon as he had done, so that you see how he came to his own and his own received him not. And in *Luke 16. 14*. there you shall see his Entertainment; upon another Sermon, the Text saith, *And the Pharisees also who were Covetous, heard all these things:*

things : And what then? *And they derided Him.* The Greek word is, *They blew their Noses at Him* : They Snuffled in their Noses at Him : They Scorned Him, as we express Scorn and Contempt, by Blowing the Nose. This is the Propriety of the Word that in your *English* is Translated, *They derided Him.* And who were these? The *Pharisees*, that were the most seeming Righteous Men that did live ; and the greatest Scholars, and those that Liv'd the most Honestly among Men. And why did they deride Him? But only because they were Covetous. You shall have, not only Covetous Men, but any who live in a way of sin, if the Ministry of the Word comes against that sin, they will secretly Scorn and Contemn the Word : Thus they did to Christ.

And St. *Paul*, you may see when he came to Preach the Gospel, what Entertainment he had : St. *Paul*, he was the most Famous Preacher that ever Liv'd upon the Face of the Earth, next unto Jesus Christ. *Anstine* had three Wishes, and one of them was : That he might have seen *Paul* in the Pulpit, and heard him Preach ; because he was a Man of such an admirable Spirit. But I shall shew you what Entertainment the Preaching of *Paul* had, who was such an admirable Preacher. There are a great many Scriptures to shew the hard Entertainment that *Paul* had, in *Acts* 13. 44, 45. *And the next Sabbath Day, came almost the whole City together to hear the Word of God.* There was a strange Preacher came among them, and there came a mighty Company, the whole City ; that is, the Generality of the City came together to hear the Word of God. But mark, in ver. 45. *But when the Jews saw the Multitude, they were filled with Envie, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, Contradicting, and Blaspheming.* Just thus it

was

was with the Jews, they were filled with Envy, and spoke against those things which were spoken by Paul, Contradicting and Blaspheming. It were endles to shew you all his hard Entertainment, how he was put in the Prison, and in the Stocks, and Whipt, as if he had been a very Rogue; when as, ever since the World began, the Lord had never a more Glorious Instrument, to shew forth His Praise; and yet he was Whipt up and down like a Rogue, and scarce a Ragg to hang upon his Back; he was accounted the Off-scouring of the World. But there is a most Notable thing about Pauls Ministry, if you Compare two Scriptures together, in *Act* 16. 9. with what follows: *And a Vision appeared to Paul in the Night: There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us.* Paul had a mighty strong Call to go and Preach to Macedonia, he had a Vision by Night. And it was not a Delusion, but even the Voice of God which did call to Paul, Come over to Macedonia and help us: Therefore, saith the Text, *Immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering, that the Lord had Called us for to Preach the Gospel unto them.* We were sure that God had Called us, and this was a very strong Call. Now you will say, What Paul? Such a Preacher, and had such a strong Call: Certainly, he would prevail with them all, and bring them all Home. But, Mark, what the Success of Pauls Ministry was, in *ver. 12.* *And from thence to Philippy, which is the Chief City of that part of Macedonia, and a Colony: And we were in that City, abiding certain dayes.* Here's no mention of any Fruit of his Ministry: There we sat certain dayes, to wait what opportunity we might have to Preach the Gospel there. And in *ver. 13.* *And on the Sabbath, we went out of the*

City by a Rivers side, where Prayer was wont to be made ; and we sat down, and spake unto the Women which Resorted thither. Mark, It seems he had no Opportunity to Preach in the City, they had no mind to hear him : But, saith he, on the Sabbath-day we went out of the City by the Rivers side, and we sat down and spake to the Women : There were but a Company of poor Women, the great ones of the City, they would not come ; but a Company of Women came to us, and yet Paul had this mighty Call of God. And when he comes to the chief City of Macedonia, he was forced to go out of the City if he would Preach ; and there comes a few Women, and among these Women, saith the Text, ver. 14. *A certain Woman named Lydia, a Seller of Purple, of the City of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us : Whose Heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.* Here's the fruit of his Ministry, *A certain Woman.* Among them all, none but the Women would come : And among these Women, there was a certain Woman, one poor Woman called Lydia, and it pleased God to open her Heart : Certainly, If God had opened the Hearts of any other, they would have been mentioned as well. And you shall find that Paul had very ill Entertainment among the rest of the Multitude, ver. 22. *And the Multitude rose up together against them* (see what Entertainment he had) *and the Magistrates Rent off their Clothes, and Commanded to Beat them.* And when they had laid many Stripes upon them, they cast them into Prison, charging the Jailor to keep them safely. Who having received such a charge, thrust them into the Inner Prison, and made their Feet fast in the Stocks. Here's the Man that had such a mighty Call of God by a Vision from Heaven, and yet you

see



see how his Ministry doth prevail. Thus you see, that the Gospel may be sent to Places, and that by a strange Work of Gods Providence, and yet a very few Imbrace it; yea, it may be Rejected by the greatest part. I might shew unto you Examples of the same kind: And just as it was with the Apostles, so it was with the Prophets. As those Three Famous Prophets, *Isaiah*, *Jeremiah*, and *Ezekiel*. See the working of *Isaiah's* Ministry, in *Isa. 53. Who hath believed our Report, and to whom is the Arm of the Lord Revealed.* We come and Preach things to the People, and they come and hear us, and think they are very strange things that they hear the Minister say, but they do not believe it. Who doth believe it? Yea, you know that the Lord doth Complain, that He did stretch out His Hands even all the Day, *Isa. 65. 2. I have spread out my Hands all the Day, unto a rebellious People, which walketh in a Way that is not good, after their own Thoughts. I spread out my Hands:* That is, I come in my Ministry, saith God by His Prophet, and I there open the Arms of my Mercy, and open the Riches of my Grace to their Souls; but they Walk in Wayes that are not good. And what Wayes were they? *According to their own Thoughts.* Look what their own Thoughts are, and what is most pleasing to them. They more regard their own Thoughts, than all those Blessed and Glorious Truths, that are made known unto them in the Ministry of the Word.

And as for *Jeremiah* you have it in *Chap. 20. ver. 8.* you have very strange kind of Expressions about him: *Since I spake, I cried out, I cried Violence and Spoil, because the Word of the Lord was made a Reproach unto me, and a Derision daily.* O the Word of the Lord was made a Reproach and a Derision to *Jeremiah*.

And for *Ezekiel*, do but read *Chap. 2.* of that Propheſie, and there you ſhall find, that God tells him before-hand, that He did ſend him to a Rebellious Houſe; yea, God told him that he ſhould Live among Bryars and Thorns. And yet it is obſervable, That this Prophet *Ezekiel*, did Propheſie in the time of their Captivity, was ſent unto the People of *Iſrael*, when they were in Captivity. One would have thought, that in the time of their Affliction, that if ever they would have attended to the Word of the Lord, then they would. No: But in the time when they were in Captivity, when God had fulfilled the words that were Threatned by the former Prophets; though they ſaw how God had made good His Words by the former Prophets, yet they continued a Rebellious People. O this was an extream thing! It was not ſo much for them to reject *Jeremiah*, that did Propheſie of their Captivity; I, he tells us of nothing but Judgments, but we hope God is a more Merciful God; and upon that perhaps they rejected Him, I, but ſurely when they were in Captivity, now they ſhould, one would have thought, acknowledged that to the Lord belongs Glory, but to us nothing but Shame and Confuſion. No: But yet their Hearts continued hard, as a Brick in the Fire, it is harder for the Fire; and ſo were their Hearts in the time of their Affliction. I ſhall not need to Inſtance in any further particulars, it is clear that God ſends the Miniſtry of the Goſpel to places ſometimes, where it may be it will be rejected. Now for the Opening of the Point, there are theſe Two things I intended.

First, How it comes to paſs that it is Rejected, or why Men do Reject the Goſpel.

Secondly, What's the Reason that God will ſend it  
to

to those places, that He knows before-hand that it will not be Entertain'd.

The Lord sends the Ministry of Peace, the Offer of Peace by Jesus Christ to Souls, and yet they do not regard it; but cast it off. Because indeed, First, The generallity of People, they do not know God; they do not know that they have to deal with an Infinite and Glorious God in all their wayes; they do not know whom it is that they have sinned against, and therefore do not understand their danger; and upon this the Ministry of the Gospel is but a dry thing unto them: Whereas, did but the Souls of Men and Women, understand what an Infinite and a Glorious Majesty, they had to deal withal; and thereby what a dreadful thing it is, to have the Wrath of God to be revealed to their Souls, they would hearken to the Ministry of the Word. That this is the Reason, it appears; in *John 15. 20, 21. Saith Christ to his Disciples, Remember the Word that I said unto you, The Servant is not greater than the Lord: If they have Persecuted me, they will also Persecute you: If they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also: But now, Mark, ver. 21. But all these things will they do unto you for my Names sake, because they know not Him that sent me.* Here's the Reason why they will do thus unto you, they will be far from entertaining of you, but will rather oppose you: Why? *Because they know not Him that sent me.* As if He should say, Did they but know Him that sent me, did they but know what a God the Lord is, what the Father is, what an Infinite Majesty, and dreadful Deity they have to deal withal; did they but understand that, certainly they would not cast you out: But they will not entertain you, *Because they know not Him that sent me.*

Secondly,

Secondly, There is nothing that doth discover more the Vileness of sin, than the Gospel. O the Gospel being Preached aright, (I say) nothing in the World can discover the hainousness of sin, the Vileness, the Abominable Nature of sin, more than the Gospel. All the Terrors of the Law, and the Curses of the Law, cannot discover so much of the dreadfulnes of the Evil of sin, as the Gospel: And we know that Men that love their sin, cannot endure that which doth discover the Evil of it.

But you will say, How doth the Gospel discover so much of the Evil of sin?

Certainly, You may see more of the evil of sin, by the Ministry of the Gospel, than by the dreadful Threats of the Law: For the Gospel shews that sin makes such a dreadful Breach between God and the Creature, that only the Son of God made Man, and put under a Curse, can make up the Breach again: In the Red-glass of the Blood of Jesus Christ, that is Preached to you in the Ministry of the Gospel the evil of sin, is more fully discern'd, than in the bright Crystal-glass of the Law; that doth discover somewhat, but this shews you more: It shews you that those beloved sins of yours that you have Imbrac'd, and have had a great deal of Sweetness and Gain by, O they are such Snakes and Vipers in your Bosom, as makes such a Breach between God and your Soul; that only the Son of God, paying an Infinite price for the Satisfying for these, can take away from you.

And further, The Gospel doth discover more to Debase a Man, than any thing can possibly be Imagined: There is nothing that doth more discover that which may Abuse Men, and bring them Low, and make them Vile in their own Eyes, than the Gospel. Why? The Gospel

pel doth shew unto them, that they are by Nature the Enemies to God. It is the Gospel doth discover that, because it is the Doctrine of Reconciliation; and it doth discover, that all a Mans Righteousness is nothing, his own Righteousness is nothing in point of Salvation, for Justification; that whatsoever Righteousness a Man hath by common Gifts, by his good Nature, it will not serve his turn in the Day of Jesus Christ, he may perish notwithstanding; It takes a Man off from all his Civil Righteousness, and so makes him to be as a vile wretched Creature before the Lord, and one that must lie upon meer pure Mercy, or else must perish to all Eternity: whatsoever he thought himself, he must be taken from his own bottom, even from that which his Soul Imbrac'd, and was as dear unto him as his own Soul, he must be taken from all: O now, this is a hard saying, and who can bear it.

The Gospel doth teach Self-denial, that we must deny our own Excellency, every beloved Lust, and to be nothing in a Mans own Eyes. I, indeed, it is the first Lesson of the Gospel; saith Christ, *If any man will follow me, let them deny themselves.* Now Men naturally are Proud and Haughty, and what for them to come and appear before the Lord as vile wretched Caitiffs in themselves, and to have all their Righteousness to be counted as filthy Rags; now to see that they must be Sav'd by a Righteousness that is above them and beyond them, and without them. O, this is a very hard saying.

The Gospel requires Conditions that are very hard to Flesh and Blood, that we must be willing to Sell and part with all for Christ, as the wise Merchant did.

And besides, It is a very high Mystery, a thing that is above the reach of any Natural Man living; and Peo-



ple Generally are of Slight, Vain, and Proud Spirits. Now being partly Slight and Vain, and partly Proud, they will not bend their Minds to dive into those things that they are not presently able to read. It is that Mystery that the Angels do stoop down to pry into, and it requires a great deal of pains to behold the Glory of God in it. Now the Vain, and Drossy, and Proud hearts of Men and Women, they pass it over lightly, because they see no present need of it: They Thrive and enjoy their Estates, and they are well enough for the Flesh; and all things that are Savory to them, they have according to their hearts desire; and what need have they to trouble themselves. Many other things might be named, to shew that when the Gospel comes to places, why it is not entertained.

*Quest.* But you will say, Why doth God send it, God knows it will not be entertain'd; it is not with God as it is with us, to go to a place at adventures? It is said, If they hear them: There can be no Ifs with God, God knows every thing. Now if God knows that before a Man comes, it will not be entertain'd, why doth God send it?

*Ans.* 1. To that I Answer, First, That Gods Wayes and Judgments are Unsearchable, and past finding out in this thing. For, indeed, there is nothing wherein God doth appear more Wonderful in His Wayes and Judgments, past finding out, than in this, in sending the Gospel sometimes to a place, where He sees it will not prevail; and denies it to another place, where He sees that if it were among them, it would be likely more to prevail. You will say, This is strange; and yet this is certain. This is the Administrations of God, that sometimes God denies the Gospel to a place where He doth

see, that if He sent it they would Entertain it more, and sends it to another place where He sees they will not Entertain it. Now to make this out by Scripture, that Text is clear for it, in *Mat. 11. 21. Wo unto thee, Chorazin, Wo unto thee, Bethsaida, for if the mighty Works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sydon, they would have Repented long ago in Sack-cloth and Ashes.* It is a strange Speech, almost as any one that is in Scripture: Here's *Chorazin*, and *Bethsaida*, have the Gospel sent to them, and they did not Entertain it: Saith Christ, *If the Works that were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sydon, they would have Repented, and yet I denied it to them, and sent it to you.* Now there can be no Reason given of this, but only this; The Judgments of God are unsearchable, and His Wayes past finding out; Gods Mercies are His own, the Gospel is His own, and He will send it where He pleases.

*Secondly*, But then, *Secondly*, The Lord sends His Gospel: For though perhaps it be rejected for the generallity, yet there may some one Soul Entertain it, among a People that shall so much reject it, and for the sake of that one, God may send it: God may send Ministers to a Congregation, to spend their very Heart, and Strength, and Life, and it may be may intend some one or two Souls, that are as unlikely as others; perhaps some one or two poor Servant or Child, and it is worth the Life of any Man, if he may be Blest to call home one or two in his Life time. You know the Lord lets it Rain, and the Intendment of the Rain, it is to Water the Earth; but abundance of it falls upon Tiles, and Stones, but likewise it falls upon your Beds in your Gardens, and the Intendment, I say, is for the benefit of the Ground. So the Ministry of the Gospel, Gods chief Intent is for

the good of Souls, though God causes the Ministry of it to be generally: The Gospel is Preached to Congregations, and for the generallity it doth but as it were Rain upon the Tiles and Stones; I, but there are some Beds that have some good Seeds in them, and God Intends them, If you water your Gardens in these dry times, you aim at the Herbs, but yet the Water will fall among the Weeds: So the Lord He Aims at His Herbs and Flowers, though the Gospel be dispensed to others.

Thirdly, Though God sees there be none for the present, yet God layes in for time to come: God will send His Gospel to a place, though He sees this Generation will get no good by it; and God may Intend the good of the Generation that is to come, by sending His Ministry in this particular Generation; though He sees that they will not Entertain it, yet some that may come after them, may Entertain it. As they say in *China*, they prepare Work for many Hundred years before: The Parents they are preparing Work for their Children to enjoy. And so the Lord layes In, in one Generation, for the Children that are coming after, and therefore whether you Entertain it or no, God notwithstanding will have His End accomplisht.

Fourthly, Another Reason why God sends His Gospel, where He knows it will not be Entertain'd by the Generallity, it is this, To leave Men wholly without Excuse. I may put these two together, To discover the Abominable sinfulness of the Hearts of Men, and to leave them wholly without Excuse. There is nothing in the World that doth discover the sinfulness of Mans Heart, more than this, That when the Lord sends this Gospel among them, yet it is rejected. The Preaching of any Moral Truths, do nothing so much argue the  
sinful-

sinfulness of Mans Heart in the rejection of them, as when the Gospel is Preached, and that is rejected. That argues the Abominable wickedness of Mans Heart, yea, for ought we know, more than is in the very Devil. We do not know that there is so much Perverseness in any of the Devils in Hell, as there is in the Heart of that Man that doth reject the Ministry of the Gospel. And why? Because God never tried them, God never put it to trial, to offer any Terms of Peace to them, and never told them that He would be Reconcil'd to them upon any Terms: And therefore whether they have such perverseness of heart or no, it is not discovered so as thine is. But if thou Livest where the Ministry of the Gospel is Preached, and yet continuest wicked and ungodly, thou art discovered to have that wickedness in thy Heart; that for ought thou knowest, it is beyond the wickedness of any Devil in Hell. The Devils might say, Lord, hadst thou offered Terms of Peace to us, we would not have so rejected it: And then it doth leave Men utterly without Excuse. I do not say, that this is Gods primary Intention, but this comes in: Why, the Lord doth suffer the Gospel to be Preached, to leave them wholly without Excuse. And for that, you have that Text in the fore-named place, *John 15. 22. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: But now have they no Cloak for their sin.* Sin: Why are there any Men in the World that have no sin? Why, did Christ coming bring sin to them? It did not add sin, but it did Discover their sin, and it took away their Cloak for their sin: Now upon my coming to them, and when they shall reject me, and the offer of Grace that I bring from my Father; now they have sin to purpose, now their sin is of a Scarlet Colour, now they have no Plea, they

they cannot say, Lord, if thou hadst sent to us, to Reveal to us thy Mercy, and the danger of our sin. The danger of your sin, may God say: Did not I send those to you that did Preach, that nothing but the Heart Blood of my Son, could pacifie for your sin. Could there have been any thing more to reveal the evil of your sin, than this was? O now you have no Excuse at all for your sin.

Fifthly, Another Reason is this, which is one of the chief: That the Lord might cause all those hereby that do not entertain the Gospel, to see the Freeness of His Grace towards them. A poor Soul that the Lord is pleased to work upon by the Gospel, hath no cause to attribute any thing to himself: There are others, and such a Multitude of People, more Learned than I, and Men and Women that had greater parts than I, they had the Gospel preached to them, and they do not see those things that the Lord hath Revealed to me: I can tell no Reason of this Difference, only Free-grace. And certainly, Those People whom God is pleased to make the Gospel effectual, upon the hearing of this Point, and seeing how it is Verified in the Examples of others; O they have cause to Cry out, Grace, Grace, to the Lord. What is there in me rather than others; as Proud, and Stout, and Vile Hearts as any; and we see the Gospel is rejected by them: and what reason is it that it is not so with me? *John 14. 22.* It's a speech of *Judas*, (not of him that betrayed Christ) *Lord, How is it that thou Revealest thy self unto us, and not unto the World?* Lord, We cannot devise how it should be, that thou shouldst Manifest thy Self to us, and not unto the World: We see that the World rejects Thee; O this is, that we may have the more Cause to Bless the Name of God here, and to Magnifie His Free-grace to all Eternity afterwards.



# Sermon V.

Luke 10. 6.

*Your Peace shall rest upon it, &c.*

## APPLICATION.

*First,* **I**S it so, that even the Blessed Ministry of the Gospel, the Opening of Jesus Christ, and the Riches of Gods Grace may be Rejected by People, and is often. The Consideration of this First, should Teach us to bewail the horrible Wickedness of Mans Heart, and the Dishonour that is done to God in this: When those Riches of Gods Grace, that glorious Work of God in Christ, the Blessed Son of God, coming to Ransom Souls, and to Deliver them out of the neathermost Hell; yet he Rejected. There's no Object that ever was in the World, that is such an Object of Lamentation as this is. When Christ came to *Jerusalem*, He falls a Weeping: Upon what ground? *O, if thou hadst known*, saith He, *at least in this thy day, those things that concern thy Peace: Thou didst not know those things that did concern thy Peace.* Perhaps it may be meant, outward Peace. In great part it is. But if that be such an Object of Lamentation, as to draw Tears from Christ, what an Object

ject of Lamentation is it to Rend, indeed, the Hearts of those that understand what Christ is, what the Offer of Christ means; That Christ should be Preached in any place, and yet rejected. When *Jeremiah* went to Preach (though not such a Message as this is that now we are Speaking of) yet when he saw the People would not hear, *Chap. 13. ver. 15. Hear ye and give ear, be not Proud, for the Lord hath spoken.* But in ver. 17. *But if ye will not hear it, my Soul shall weep in secret places for your Pride, and mine Eyes shall weep sore, and run down with Tears, because the Lords Flock is carried away Captive.* If ye will not hear: That indeed should be the work of the Ministers of the Gospel, when they are Rejected. Not to be Careless, and say, I have done my Work, and what need I care. But they should take it to Heart, and Lament it as the greatest Affliction that can befall them; yea, more than any Affliction whatsoever: That the Blessed Message that they are sent withal, is Rejected by Wretched and Sinful Men.

*Secondly*, If God in Christ be sometimes Rejected, all the Mercy of God in His Son; we should not think much, though our love and kindness towards others be many times Slighted, and Disregarded. Indeed, there's nothing goes more to any Ingenuous Heart, than to have his love and kindness to be Disregarded: But when we find our Hearts troubled at this, O that such a one that I have done so much for, and yet that he should deal thus with me; Lay thine hand upon thy Heart, and consider what God hath done for thee in Christ, and how ill thou hast requited Him. Is it so much for thee a poor Worm, not to have thy Love and Kindness imbrac'd: What is it then for the Infinite God, not to have that

In-

Infinite Love and Mercy of His to the Children of Men, not Imbraced but Rejected.

*Thirdly,* Let's learn from hence, never to trust our own Hearts. We think often, had we such means as others have, then we should not do as they do; surely we should do better. Men are very ready to trust their own Hearts, and in the use of Means: But let us learn from hence never to trust in our own Hearts, or in the use of any Means. God may send you Means, and Reveal glorious Truths unto you; yet it may so fall out, that you may never come to be partakers of the good of those things: It hath been so with many, and you must look to your own Hearts. Do not Bless your selves in this, Through Gods Mercy the Lord hath sent us His Word plentifully, and the Gospel comes to be Opened clearly among us: That's not enough, what God hath done, but look you into your own Hearts, how you *Imbrace* it; otherwise the Gospel may come among you, and yet you never come to be Saved by it. But this, indeed, is a sad Condition, wheresoever it is.

*Fourthly.* Further, Gods Ministers are to Learn from hence, not to be Discouraged. They come and Preach, and with an Expectation to prevail with the Hearts of People, to draw them to Christ. When they have been in their Studies, labouring to find out some Truths of the Gospel, and to fit it to the Hearts of their Auditors, and have been Praying over it: They come now with Expectation that some good may be done, that some Soul may be drawn in to Christ, yet perhaps find it quite otherwise, and the People to sit Dead under it; it may be Slight it, Contemn it, Scorn it, Disobey it: But they must not be, I say, Discouraged in this, as if so be a strange thing had befallen them. What art thou more than  
Jesus

Jesus Christ thy Master? What art thou more than *Paul* and other of the Apostles? They have been rejected all in their Ministry, and what art thou that thou canst not bear any Rejection? Indeed, it is the hardest thing to be Born by a Minister of the Gospel, that possibly may be: But, consider, That it is not a new thing for the Gospel, to be Rejected. I remember, I have read of *Melancthon*, he had such thoughts, that when he began to Preach, he should Convert all that heard him. He thought there was so much Reason in what he Spake, and so much Evidence and Power to prevail with the Hearts of People, that he thought he should prevail with every one; but he found it otherwise by Experience. And though, indeed, when any Minister that is acquainted with the Glorious things of God and Christ, come to open them to People, they are ready to think, such things will surely prevail with the Hearts of People, but the Lord teaches him to know that the Blessing depends upon Himself: That though the things be never so Excellent and Moving, yet all will not do except the Lord comes in by His Almighty Power.

*Fifthly*, Let all those with whom the Ministry of the Gospel doth prevail in any measure, Bless God that makes such a difference between them and any others. It is Preached unto many, but doth them no good. But the Lord hath Called thee out, and it hath struck thy Heart, converted thy Spirit: Thou seest cause to stand and admire at the Glory of God in Christ, and thou wonderest perhaps that all People are not taken with the Riches of the Glory of Gods Grace in Christ: Well, Bless God that hath made a difference between thee and others. It may be in the same Family another Scorns it, and Contemns it, perhaps one that came out of the same Womb

Womb despises it, and God hath taken thee, and revealed Himself to thee, it may be thy rich Neighbour Contemns it; but God looks upon thee (a poor Creature) and makes Himself known to thee. It may be a Learned Man he slights it, and makes nothing of it; and thou who art but a Babe, hast those things Revealed. Thou hast cause to thank God for it, *For Christ doth*: He thanks His Father for this thing, That He should be pleased to pass by the Wise and great ones of the World, and chuse Babes, *Mat. 11. 25. At that time, Jesus Answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that thou hast hid these things from the Wise and Prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes.* Now this Scripture that I bring, not only to shew you that God doth sometimes Reveal the great Mysteries of the Gospel to Babes, and hide them from the Wise, but as a Text to stir up your Hearts to Bless God, if He hath done so for any of you. Upon this ground Jesus Christ doth thank His Father for it; then surely thou hast cause to thank God the Father for this great Mercy of His, to put such a difference between thee and others. For, indeed, it is one of the most glorious Works of God, This Work of the Lord making known the Great and High Mysteries of the Gospel to poor weak ones; when as the Great, and Rich, and Mighty, and Learned of the World, do not come to understand it. It is one of the great Miracles by which the Lord doth Confirm the Gospel to be His own, as great a Miracle as other Miracles that were Wrought by Christ. And for that, this is very observable that we have in the place where *John* sends to Christ, to know whether He were the Messias, or no. Now mark the Answer that Christ gives unto *John's* Messengers, *Jesus Answered and said unto them,*

I i



*them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see, the Blind receive their sight, and the Lame walk, and the Lepers are cleansed, and the Deaf hear, and the Dead are raised, and the Poor have the Gospel Preached to them: And as some of the Evangelists have it, Poor receive the Gospel.* Observe why Christ brings this, He brings it in as an Argument that he was the Messiah. John would know whether He was the Messiah: How shall he know it? Why go and tell him, *The Blind receive their sight, the Lame walk, the Lepers are cleansed, the Deaf hear, the Dead are raised.* These are good Arguments to prove that Christ was the Messiah. If Christ could Work such Miracles as to give sight to the Blind, to make the Lame to walk, to cleanse the Lepers, to cause the Deaf to hear, and to raise the Dead; these indeed were good Arguments. But how comes in the last, *And the Poor receive the Gospel?* How is this an Argument that Christ is the Messiah? One would think that this should rather be an Argument, that He is not the Messiah. They might say, I indeed, there are these great things done by Him, but there is one thing makes us suspect that He is not the Messiah: For our Great, Rich, and Learned Men, they do not receive Him, only a Company of poor Ignorant People, this Vulgar sort: For so was the Arguing of the Pharisees there, in John 7. 48. say they, (when the Officers were Affected with the Ministry of Christ) *Have any of the Rulers, or of the Pharisees believed on him? Have any of them Believed on Him? But this People that knoweth not the Law, are Cursed.* Only a Company of poor Ignorant People, they believe on Christ. *But the Rulers, have any of the Rulers, or of the Pharisees, the Great Men, and the Rich Men, the Learned Men, Have they believed?* You see

see that this was a Stumbling-block, whereby they would perswade Men, that Christ was not the Messias. But mark, That which Men make the great Stumbling-block, why Christ is not the Messias, that Christ makes unto *John* the great Argument, why He was the Messias: *Because the Poor receive the Gospel.* And Christ doth put this among his other Miracles. And you will say, How is this an Argument? Thus, It is one of the greatest Miracles that ever Christ wrought, and it may well be Reckoned among those Miracles, of giving Eyes to the Blind, and Hearing to the Deaf. Thus, To make one that is a poor weak Creature, that hath but a mean Capacity, yet that such a one shall be able to see into the Great, and High, and Glorious Mysteries of the Gospel, that the Angels desire to pry into: So to see into the Reolity, and the Certainty, and the Glory of those Mysteries, that he dares venture his Soul and his Eternal Estate upon: I say, This is as great a Work of a God, as ever any Work that God did in this World, and therefore it may well be put among Christs Miracles, and an Argument that Christ is the Messias. If Christ shall Reveal such Glorious things, that are the Objects of the Understanding of Angels, to poor Illiterate People, when as the Wise of the World shall not be able to see them, but shall Reject them: They shall not see so much as to dare to venture the loss of a Lust for them, of any Creatures contentment for them; but a poor weak Man or Woman Illiterate, that understands but little in other things, shall come to see so much the Glory of God shining in the Face of Christ, as he dares venture not only all outward Comforts in this World, but his Soul and Eternal Estate, upon the Grace of God in his Son. Here's a mighty Work of Christ. The Poor they come then to receive the Gospel, it is Preached to

them and they receive it; and hereby Christ shews his Power. Now hath Christ shown such a Miraculous Work of his upon thy Soul, when he hath past by others that are Understanding, and Men of Parts, & yet Reveal'd such deep and hidden Mysteries of the Gospel unto thee. Oh admire at the Grace of God in his Son to thee, and Bless him, for this is not an ordinary Mercy; it is a choice Mercy. The Gospel is Rejected many times where it comes, and thou seest it; only God hath made a separation between thee and others: As I told you of that Speech of Judas, not Iscariot, Lord, saith he, *Why is it that thou Revealest thy self unto us, and not unto the World.* Thou hast cause to wonder at it indeed.

*Sixthly*, And then further, that we may hasten to what remains: If this be so, that Gods sends the Gospel where it is Rejected, hence be not Scandalized when you see it Despised and Contemned. Let none be Scandalized at it, so saith Christ, in *Mat. 11*, when he saith, *The Poor have the Gospel Preached to them:* in the next words, *And Blessed is he, whosoever is not offended in me.* For Men are ready to be offended, when they see great Ones Reject the Ministry of the Gospel: But you hear that God sends it where it is Rejected, therefore be not you offended; do not think that because others do not Imbrace it, therefore there is nothing in it, and why should I: There is this Temptation in the Hearts of many, though while they are Hearing of the Gospel Preached, their Hearts are taken with what they Hear, and they are Convinc'd; but when they go away, and are among their Companions and others that they find to slight all and to disregard all; their Hearts are taken off likewise. But, O learn by this Point, never to be Scandalized by others casting off the Gospel: For it is that which Christ hath forewarned his Ministers when they

they go to Preach ; he doth intimate to them that they must expect that their Ministry must not prevail with all.

7ly. Lastly, Is this true, That God sends the Preaching of the Gospel where he sees it will and doth not prevail with many? Now let every one of you lay his hand upon his Heart, and think thus with himself ; Is it I ? Am I the man ? am I the Woman to whom Jesus Christ shall be Preached, and shall not prevail ? O the Lord forbid that this should be so, though it doth not prevail with others, such and such, yet God forbid that it should not prevail with my Heart ; let me embrace it so much the rather. Do I see Jesus Christ rejected by others ? O it is that which should go neer to my Heart, that the Lord is rejected by any, and shall he be rejected by me too, the Lord forbid ; that as Christ said to his Disciples when others forsook him, *And will ye also go away ? O whither shall we go from thee* saith Peter, *for with thee are the words of Eternal life* ; so dost thou see others slight and neglect the glorious Ministry of the Gospel, and wilt thou do so ? wilt thou add to the dishonour of the Gospel too ? O the Lord, the Lord forbid ; but let me the rather embrace it, by how much the more it is neglected, and dis-regarded by others. What, shall such a glorious Gospel be preached in vain ? What, shall the precious Blood of Jesus Christ be shed in vain ? and it is in vain in respect of many Souls, and shall it be in respect of my Soul ? the Lord forbid, O that the Lord would put such kind of thoughts into your Hearts, when you see others live under the Ministry of the Gospel in a sinful way. And thus much for this Supposition, *If not : What follows ?*

*If not, Let it return to you again.*

Here we have first an encouragement to Gods Ministers, in case their Ministry is rejected.

And

And *secondly*, A dreadful denunciation against those that shall reject the Gospel.

*First*, the encouragement of the Ministers of God in case their Ministry be rejected, *Let it return to you again.* In this we have these two Things.

*First*, That when any Minister Preaches Christ to a people, if the people get no good by his Preaching, yet he shall have the benefit of it upon his own Soul; that's the first: let it return to you again if they will not embrace it, so as to have the good and benefit of it to them, it shall return to you, and you shall have the benefit and blessing of it upon your own Souls.

*Secondly*, Let it return, that is, though it prevails not here, yet it shall not lose any thing of its efficacy, of the life, of the vigor of it, but it shall return to you with as much efficacy and life as ever, so as if you be sent to some other place, there may be as much hopes of doing good as ever you had; these are the two things that are for the encouragement of Gods Ministers, in case their Ministry be rejected. Briefly of these:

*First*, That when a people rejects the Gospel, Gods Ministers they shall not lose by it, they shall have the blessing of their Ministry; in *Isai. 49. 4.* *Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain:* here's a dreadful complaint; but mark what follows: *yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God:* there is a correcting of himself as it were; as if he should say, what did I say it was in vain, that I had spent my strength in vain, to no purpose, that I had gotten nothing by what I had done? No, let me correct my self, surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God, I shall not lose my labour; though I do no good upon people, yet I shall not lose my labour: The truth is, even this Complaint is not



not spoken so much in the person of the Prophet, as of Jesus Christ: It is a complaint of Christ, for it is apparent in the reading of this Chapter, that it is Prophetical of Christ; for it follows, *And now saith the Lord, that formed me from the Womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength: And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant, to raise up the Tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give you for a light to the Gentiles, that thou must be my salvation to the ends of the Earth, &c.* Now who was he that was a light to the Gentiles, and the Salvation of God to the ends of the Earth? It was Jesus Christ, and yet Christ himself is brought in here complaining, that he had laboured in vain, and spent his strength for nought, and in vain: but God comes in and encourages him, and tells him that he should not lose the benefit of their labours; his judgment should be with the Lord, and his work with his God. And further, that though he did not prevail with some, yet he should with others, he should be given as a light to the Gentiles. And likewise that place is well known in the 2 Cor. 2. 15, 16. *For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved; I that's true, but mark what follows, and in them that perish: A sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: as truly in them that perish, as in them that are saved, Gods Ministers are a sweet savour of Christ, therefore their labour is not in vain. To us belongs faithfulness; we are to look to be faithful in our work; but for the success that belongs to God himself. It is a note that Bernard hath on the 1 Cor. 15. 10. saith the Apostle there, By the Grace of God I am what I am, and his*

Grace

*Grace that was bestowed upon me, was not in vain: but I laboured more abundantly than they all.* Saith Bernard here, he doth not so much glory in the fruit of his Labours, as in his *labouring*; for indeed we are to glory rather in our work, than in the faithfulness of our hearts in our work; rather than in the success. Ministers many times may look too much after the success of their labour, and yet if there be any thing in the world that a man may look for the success of his labour in, it is in the work of the Ministry; but especially he is to look after his faithfulness in his labour: and if he be faithful there, he shall not lose his labour: But, saith Bernard, you must have a care rather to discharge your work, to take care of Souls, rather than the curing of them: it is your work to take care of them, but it is Gods work to cure them; that's to be left to God. There is a Question among Divines, Whether a Minister that Converts many Souls here by his Ministry, or another that is as faithful every whit as he, and as painful, and yet doth not convert Souls, or but very few; which of these shall have most Glory in Heaven, whether the one or the other? Many think rather the Second, because the one hath a great part of his comfort here, and his encouragement; the other goes on in his painfulness and faithfulness, though he hath not such comforts and encouragements. And indeed, of all Works, it is the hardest work for a man to go on comfortably in the work of the Ministry without success; there is no work so hard as that is: What, for a man to think, O that the Lord should send me to a people, to what end? to preach the Gospel indeed, but to harden them, but to aggravate their sin, but so as their condemnation shall be increased: O it is a dreadful thought unto the heart of a Minister, to think that he should be sent about such a task as  
this

this is. *Jeremy* was even weary, and said, He would preach no more in the Name of the Lord, only the Word of God was as fire in his bones; and he could not forbear; but had not Gods Word been as fire in his bones, certainly he would have forborn: Hence it is that we read, when God was to send his Ministers to People, that they should not prevail withall; the Lord made mighty preparations, and there was much ado for to get the hearts of his Servants to go about their work: I'll give you two Instances remarkable for this: The first is in the Prophet *Isaiah*, the Lord had a Message to send by the Prophet, he would send him to Preach, but to a People where he should not prevail; yea the Text saith, *Go and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not: make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and convert and be healed.* The Lord sends his Prophets to go and to harden the hearts of people; as the truth is, there is nothing in the world will harden mens Hearts more than the Ministry of the Word, if it doth not soften them. If it doth not prevail with mens hearts to convert them, I say there is nothing will harden mens hearts more. There are no People in the world have harder Hearts than those that live under the Ministry of the Gospel. *Go and make the heart of this People fat;* but this was a mighty hard Message: How must this Prophet be prepared? There needs be a mighty deal of preparation to make him go chearfully on in his work. You shall see that the Prophet had a most Glorious Vision to prepare him: *He saw the Glory of God filling the Temple; and above it stood the Cherubims, and one cried to another, and said, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of*

*Hosha, the whole Earth is full of his Glory, and the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cryed, and the house was filled with swank. Then said I, woe is me. The Lord was fain first to reveal his Glory to him; secondly to humble his heart; Then said I, woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips: thirdly, the Lord caused a Seraphim to fly unto him, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongues from off the Altar; and he laid it upon my mouth and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Here's three notable works of God to prepare the heart of this Prophet: then in v. 8. I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, whom shall I send, and who will go for us? then I said, here am I, send me. After he had first seen the glory of God; secondly, after he had been humbled for his sin; and thirdly, after he had had such an extraordinary testimony of the pardon of his sin. Now Lord, as if he should say, send me about the hardest work that thou hast to do, and then the Lord tells him what that hard Message should be that he should carry; he should go to a people and Preach, but it should be to harden their hearts, and not to prevail with their Spirits. And the like we have in the Prophet Ezekiel, if you read the second, and the beginning of the third Chap. the Lord tells him, that he was to go to a rebellious House; but you shall observe such a strange work of God for the preparing of his Heart for it in the most part of the first Chap. the Prophet had a most glorious Vision of God for the setting of him a work; that teaches us, that indeed there is nothing will set us so much a work as the sight of God. Secondly, such a voice of God as humbled him, for when I heard, I fell upon my face; and then God comes and comforts him, and sets him upon his feet. Further,*

then, the Spirit enters into him, and spake unto him, and then declared his Message, and gave him the soul, and bid him eat, and made it to be sweet unto him, though it was a message of threatening: I speak all this to this end, to shew that there is no work more difficult than the work of a Minister, and especially when his Ministry hath not success; and therefore this point is very reasonable to tell unto them all, that though they have not the success that they desire, yet the good of their Ministry shall return upon them again. Are there a People that they are sent to, to whom do they offer Christ? Why they would fain gain their Souls unto Christ, that they may live for ever in praising the riches of the grace of God in Christ in the highest Heavens. But will they not, know, thou shalt have the blessing of that peace; look what glory and comfort they should have had, it shall return into thy bosom. It is here in the Ministry of the Word, as in other Duties; suppose you pray for a Child, or Friend, or Kinsman, you do not see that he is turned to God according to your prayers; but know, your prayer is not lost for all that; the blessing of your Prayer shall return into your bosom, and therefore be encouraged in every good work as Ministers should be encouraged in their Ministry, though they have not success; so you, every one in your measure, should be encouraged in every work that God hath called you unto; go on therefore with peace and with comfort in all the work that heretofore you have been so much discouraged in; for the reward is to your faithfulness, and not to the success of your Works.

The next to this is: *Your peace shall Return*; that is, as I shewed you, it shall return with as much power and efficacy; for they may think thus, Lord, do we go to preach



to this People, and do they reject it; what hope shall we have that now the Gospel shall do good? it hath received a foil, and now the edge seems to be off, and never like to do good any where. No faith Christ, do not reason so, do not think that your Gospel hath lost the edge of it; it shall return to you again with as much power as ever it did at first. It is not so with the Gospel as with other things. Many things in the World, if once they receive a repulse, their edge is taken off; but the Gospel, though it doth receive a repulse, yet still the edge of it shall continue, and the power of it: this is that which the Apostle saith, *2 Tim. 2. 10. Wherein I suffer trouble as an evil-doer, even unto bonds; but the Word of God is not bound*: Mark, though I suffer Bonds, yet the Word of God is not bound: I am slighted and contemned, I but the Word is not bound; the Word is the same that ever it was, though I be hated and cast out, that am the Minister of the Word; yet it remains in as much strength as ever it did: I indeed am cast into a Dungeon, but the Gospel will prevail; all the persecutions of Wicked men, all the scorn that is cast upon the Gospel by them, shall not take away the edge and power and life of the Gospel; but that shall continue as much as ever: all the rage of Hell, and Devils, and Tyrants shall not take away the power of the Gospel. Indeed they may restrain such and such men in the Preaching of it, but after they are dead and rotten, and roaring in Hell, the Gospel shall prevail. We find it so at this day, ever since Christ came, the Gospel hath been opposed by Ungodly men, yet it doth remain in as much life, and vigor, and power as ever it did; and I have no cause to question but it will prevail ere long, more than ever it did in the World; though its true, sometimes we find Ministers  
Preach

Preach Sermon after Sermon, and there are but few converted to the Gospel: what shall we think that therefore it hath lost the power of it? No, Gods time is not come. When the time of God shall come to call home those that belong to his Election of Grace, it shall appear that the Gospel shall arise in power and glory, and prevail in the World again; therefore let's never despair, but that the Gospel will prevail in the World as at first, when as there were but a few poor Fishermen to Preach it, and all the World was enraged against it; the Emperors and Princes of the Earth was enraged against it, and yet these poor Fishermen did subdue a great part of the World by the power of the Gospel: therefore let not us be discouraged, for when Gods time is come, it shall prevail in a glorious manner more than ever. And so as it is with the Gospel, so it should be with the Professors of it: If God be dishonoured by others, yet let not your edge be taken off, but do you continue in the power, and life, and vigor, as much as ever.

Now the second part, which is the main that I intend; and that is the dreadful threatening of those that do reject the Gospel: only take this one point, (there are these Three:)

First, That where a people reject the Gospel, God may justly take it away from them, yea they are in danger to have it taken from them: *It shall return.* Deut. 1

Secondly, Such shall not have the blessing of the Gospel upon them; this shall be their doom, as they shall lose the Ministry of it, so they shall be cast out from the blessing of it. 2.

And then thirdly, which is yet the principal of all, and that is, That God will deal very quick with those that do reject the Gospel, *Your peace shall return, no more a-* 3.

do

do, there's an end of them. These are the Three things in this sentence against those that are not the Son of Peace, where the Gospel is preached. But a little of the First, we will leave the other.

*First*, That where a people do reject it, and that presently, for so it is, when you come to a House and offer it, if they do not embrace it, *let your peace return again*: Christ here compares his Disciples unto Chapmen that should go and offer rich Wares, they have Diamonds, and Precious Stones, things worth Thousands, and they come perhaps to poor Country-people, and open their Cabinet of Diamonds and Precious Stones, and make offers to them, but they do not know the worth of them, they will bid nothing for them: Now when he sees that they reject and despise them, saith he, give me my Wares again, and so he packs them up again, and away he goes; for saith he, this is not a people that is fit for such things as these are; so saith Christ, you are such Chapmen, I send you abroad with the most rich pearl of the Gospel, to go and shew the excellency of it to people, and to offer it to them; and the truth is, I require thus much of them, that if they would have this Pearl, they must sell all: Now the Ministry of the Gospel comes, and they are ignorant of this Pearl, that they have brought this rich Commodity. They can tell them indeed that here is an exceeding rich Pearl, but this is the tenor, that you must be content to part with all for this Pearl, that is thus: First, you must actually lay down and renounce every beloved sin. Secondly, you must enter into Bond as it were with God, that whensoever he calls for your Estates, your Libertties, your outward Peace, any Comforts that you have in the World, shall be at Gods dispose: Thus you enter into Bond, as in your dealing for Commodities, when you see

a great and rich Commodity ; you lay down somewhat for the present ; and give Bond for the rest to be paid when it shall be called for. When you go to buy Peddling things, there you lay down all at first, and no entring into Bond ; but when it is a great Purchase, then there is a little laid down for the present, and entring into Bond for the rest. Now certainly in this Bargain of the Merchant, there is first a laying down for the present, thy Lust ; thy Sin ; as if the Soul should say, O Lord, let me have my part in Christ, in this glorious Peace of the Gospel ; as for any wayes of sin that I have lived in heretofore, Lord I renounce them ; and will not live in any way of known sin, Lord grant me thy Grace to do it : Indeed this is the way of the Hearts coming in at first ; I but saith God, I will not only have thy sin renounc'd, but thy Estate, and Liberty, and Life at my dispose ; and thou shalt enter into Bonds to lay down all ; yes Lord, this is the very English of the Covenant : The Soul seeing the glory of God in Christ, saith the Soul, Lord I will not only renounce my sin, but Lord, whatsoever I am, whatsoever I have, whatsoever I can do shall be at thy dispose ; and here I enter into Bond Lord, that is, I Covenant, and Vow, and bind my self by the strongest Bonds that a poor Creature possibly can do, that whensoever thou shalt call for any of my Estate, of my Liberty, or my outward Comforts, when thou shalt call for my Life, Lord they shall be at thy dispose. Now have you sold all ? have you thus bought the Pearl ? When we come to bring the Pearl of the Gospel to you, have you embrac'd it ? O if our Ministry prevails, this hath been the frame and working of your hearts ; but if not, our Ministry hath not yet prevail'd with you ; but when your Hearts begins to work thus, then our Ministry begins

gins to work to purpose in your Souls. But we may come to most People and open the Pearls of Christ, and open the Ministry of Reconciliation, and they will do neither of these Two; neither lay down any thing for the present, renounce no known Sin; and as for Entering into Bond, to have their Estates, and Liberties, and Lives, and all to be at Gods dispose, so as they are resolved that they will never enjoy any of them, but only in God, and for God: O how far are People from this? No, they love their Estates too much, and they will see what they shall have before they part with them: And thus that all the Ministers of the Gospel Preach unto you concerning God and Christ, are but meer Notions; but we are sure our Money and Estates have something in them, and so their Hearts embrace this present World, and reject Jesus Christ: and do you so? Well saith God, Pack up your Commodities again, I have no more People in this Place, therefore go and carry them some-where else; there is another People that will know the worth of these things; there is a People in the World that will be willing to renounce their Lusts, and to give up all that they have unto me, if they may have but this Gospel preached to them; therefore go somewhere else: Just as we Read of the Apostles in the *Acts* 13. 46. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, they were not daunted, and said, *It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you, but seeing ye put it from you, and judge your selves unworthy of Eternal Life; lo, we turn to the Gentiles.* Indeed you are the Jews, and in Profession the only People of God for the present, and therefore we were to come to offer it at first to you; but seeing you judge your selves unworthy of Eternal Life, that is, if you by your carriage do manifest that you are a  
 People



People no wayes suitable to this glorious Gospel, then we turn to the *Gentiles*; we will pack up our Commodities, and go to some others that will buy it: and indeed, if there be any thing in the World that makes a Faithful Minister go from any Place, it is the rejection of his Ministry: Other things are no such Arguments as this is, and if there be any thing can Warrant it, this as much as any thing, by vertue of this Scripture, and by vertue of my Text, *Let your Peace return to you again*, and be gone to some other Place: We know the Scripture saith, that Pearls are not to be cast before Doggs, and Swine: And indeed when Men shall prize their Swinish Lusts before the Pearl of the Gospel, all the good that is tendred to them in Jesus Christ; what are they in Gods esteem but as Swine? and why should Pearls always lye before them, that they should trample them under-foot; and therefore the Lord would have his Light to be removed: God Warrants his Ministers in some Cases so to do. But let people know that this is a dreadful condition, if this should fall out concerning them: If the Lord should begin to make a tender of the Mercy of Christ to a People, or particular Souls; and if God should take it away again, that Soul or People is in a most dreadful condition: Perhaps you think you may spare it well enough; but know, if you can do well enough without the Gospel, the Gospel can do well enough without you; when that is taken away from a Place, the very light of that Place is taken away, there is double darkness. I remember I have read of the Christians in *Chrysostoms* time, howsoever people now make little esteem of the preaching of the Gospel, yet the Christians were so affected with *Chrysostom's* Ministry; the Story saith, that when he was silenced by a Wicked Empress, they did profess, That they

would rather have the Sun withdraw the beams of light from the World, then that the mouth of *John Chrysostom* should be stopt; they saw so much good in his Ministry, he preaching Christ to them, that if it were put to their choice whether they would be without the beams of the Sun, or his Ministry, they would rather chuse to be without the beams of the Sun than his Ministry. It's true, we are not to arrogate such things to any particular man now; we do not speak to that end, no, but to the Ministry it self. What if God take away a faithful Ministry, we do not speak of any particular men that are sent to Preach the Gospel to you: But certainly if God take away the clear light of the Gospel indeed, that Gospel that opens Jesus Christ, and the way of Salvation and Eternal life to your Souls, O what if God take away that from you: either take that from you, or you from that: that you shall never come to hear the Mysteries of it opened more, (but instead of the glorious things of it, you should hear some pleading for Ceremonies, Crosse, or Surplice, or Cringing, and that should be the Chaff that you should be fed withall.) I say, when God takes away this from a People, he takes away the light from them, and leaves them in darkness: It is not such a fruit of Love and Mercy from the Lord to give fruitful seasons, and to bless you in your Trading, as for the Lord to send the Ministry of peace among you to open the unsearchable Treasures and Riches of Jesus Christ; that's the special Token of Gods love to such a place, and when that's removed, then the special note of the love of God is removed; and when he takes away that, he takes away the Bread of life from you, and therefore the absence of the Word is called a *Famine*. We read of the poor people in *Egypt*, they came and sold all, that they might have Bread: It may be some of you

you complain of great Taxations, and want of Trading, and your Estates decay, and the like; I but doth not God recompence this with a more plentiful use of the Gospel than ever he did before? and doth not this Recompence you for the trouble that you suffer, and the loss of your Estates? I make no question but there are many Souls since the beginning of this Parliament that are now in Heaven, that were alive, and did suffer much for a while, but are now in Heaven, and blessing God for these Two or Three Years; and I know no greater Argument of a Carnal, Base, and Vile Heart than this, for them to be alwayes complaining of the loss of their Estates, and not to think it at all made up with the liberty of Gods Ordinances, and with the more clear light of the glorious Gospel that shines among them; whereas did the Gospel take your Hearts indeed, you would bless God. It's true Lord my Estate is less than before, but Blessed be thy Name that we live to hear Jesus Christ, and the way of Life and Salvation opened further to us than heretofore. If God should take you away, perhaps then your Consciences would accuse you, and say, we had an Opportunity wherein we heard Jesus Christ opened to us in his Natures, and in his Offices; O had we taken that time, how happy had it been for us?

Further, Perhaps Carnal Hearts may think it nothing to have the Gospel taken from them, yet when that is taken from you, know that the Kingdom of God is taken from you; that place in *Mat. 11. 12.* is very remarkable, O this is one of the dreadfulllest Threats; therefore say I unto you, *The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a Nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.* When you have the preaching of the Gospel in the clearness of it among you, know that you have the Kingdom

of God among you : Now God doth require that you should *bring forth the fruits thereof*; therefore examine your own Hearts what fruits of the Kingdom of God are in my Life, in my Family : Why, the Kingdom of God is among us, that's the meaning of Christ's and *John's* preaching, *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*; that is, now comes the Revelation of Jesus Christ in the Gospel, and he calls people to Repent upon this Ground. O Repent and Turn from your sins ; Why ? for the Revelation of Jesus Christ is come among you. I say to you in this place, therefore Repent, Repent now, for the Lord is coming to Open the Kingdom of Heaven, and to Reveal the Grace of Christ, and the Glorious things of Eternal Life to you ; and therefore if you should please your selves rather in sporting upon the Lords Day, and going to Ale-Houses and Wicked places rather than Attending upon the Word, why the Lord may take away this Gospel, and so take away the Kingdom of Heaven from you ; and the taking that from you, it is but a fore-runner to the depriving of you from the Everlasting Kingdom that the Saints shall have to all Eternity.

And know there is no Dallying with God, for when thou comest to the Offer of Mercy in Christ, saith Christ either come in or not ; Christ calls for your Answer quickly : Though the Lord be very patient towards men that never yet understood the Offering of the Gospel of Christ, but if they come once to have Christ preached to them, they must not expect the like patience. When *John* began to preach Christ, you know what he said : *Now is the Axe lay'd to the root of the Tree* : And why now more than before ? Because now the Kingdom of Heaven is to be preached to them ; and now, *Every Tree that bringeth*  
not

not forth good Fruit shall be hewn down, and cast into the Fire. Perhaps they have gone this Thirty or Forty Years, and there was no Hewing of them down; but now the Axe is lay'd to the root of the Tree. You know that of Christ to his Apostles, go your way and preach, faith he, He that Believes shall be Saved, and he that Believes not shall be damned: there is no more ado, either Believe and be Saved, or Believe not and be Damned; there is quick work, and indeed that's a Point that I would very gladly have been upon, even the Consideration of the Quick Work of God upon those Souls that shall reject the Ministry of the Gospel.

## Sermon VI.

Luke 10. 6.

*If not, it shall return to you again.*

**T**Here are Two Points more remaining, which is to be the Subject of this Exercise.

The First is this: That those that are not the Sons of Peace, (what it means you have had already opened) that do not embrace the Ministry of the Gospel, they shall have no Blessing from the peace of the Gospel, they shall not be partakers of the good of the Gospel.

*Secondly,*



*Secondly*, That God is very quick with those that do not embrace his Gospel; Go and say peace, if there be a Son of peace well and good; they shall have peace; if not, *It shall return*, saith Christ.

From the manner of the phrase that note was raised, That God doth use to be very quick with those that do not embrace the Gospel: I shall be very short in the Former of these two, because I would gladly have a little more time in the Latter.

Those who entertain not the Gospel, they shall not have the Blessing of it. I shall not need to go far for another Scripture, which is indeed a very dreadful one to this purpose, *Luke 14. 14. For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my Cup.* We have there a Parable, *A certain man made a great Supper, and bade many*: The meaning is this, It is to set out God the Father preparing of his Son, and of these Blessed Dainties at the Marriage of his Son: The scope of it is to shew the excellent things of the Gospel, that they are no other but the Dainties that are prepared by the great King of Heaven at the Marriage of his Son: The Scope of it is to shew the excellent things of the Gospel, that they are no other but the Dainties that are prepared by the great King of Heaven at the Marriage of his Son unto Souls, unto Believers. Well, there are sent his Ministers, they are the Servants of this King, they are sent to Invite to this Marriage, to Invite men to partake of the Blessed things of the Gospel. Upon this Invitation we see, that generally it was rejected. *One* saith he hath bought a Farm, *another* a Task of Oxen, and *another* hath Married a Wife, &c. and the Ministers they come in and give this account to God, Lord we have according to thy Command invited them to come in to partake

take of the good things of the Gospel; but these are their Excuses, their hearts are set upon other things: Now mark their doom in ver. 24. *For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my Supper:* That is, do they thus reject it, and slight it, and disregard it? I say to you, I profess it, that there's not one of them shall make such a slight account of that Blessed Gospel of mine, and the glorious things contained therein; not one of them that shall taste of my Supper.

Only one Text more in Rom. 2.8. *But unto them which are contentious, and do not obey the truth;* (that must needs be meant of the truth of the Gospel) *but obey unrighteousness, indignation, and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile:* Those who are set upon their evil wayes, and will not obey the truth; you see what their Doom is. The first is privative, *That they shall not taste of the Supper:* the other is Positive, *Wrath, and indignation and anguish shall be upon them.*

You will say, *That this shall return.* What then? What great Evil wil follow upon this? what most dreadful Evils?

Why first, The very want and privation of the Infinite good that the Gospel tenders to thee is evil enough, and the remaining under all those Evils that the Gospel would have delivered thee from; that's evil enough; as thus, *What doth the Gospel return, and the Blessing from you?* why then you remain under the guilt of all your Sins, and stand charged before the great God to answer for all unto the Infinite Justice; and this the Gospel would have delivered you from, had you entertained it.

Doth it return from you? Why then you stand before the Lord under the sentence of Condemnation, a Condemned Creature sent to Eternal Death; and this the Gospel would have freed you from. Doth

Doth the Gospel return again? Why then you stand a Child of Wrath before the great God, under all the Vials of his Infinite Wrath, ready every moment for ought thou knowest to be poured out upon thee: and this the Gospel would have freed thee from.

Doth the Gospel go away from thee? Why then thou standest under the Curse of the Law, and all those dreadful Threatnings that are Written in the Book of God, they are all thy Portion; and this the Gospel would have freed thee from.

Is the Gospel returned from thee? Then thou standest before God as an Enemy unto him; he looks upon thee as one that is an Enemy to him, and thou canst expect no other but to be dealt withal as an Enemy; to have God in all his Attributes to come out against thee; to have all his Creatures to come out against thee to Avenge Gods Quarrel upon thee, and this the Gospel would have freed thee from.

And so we might further name Infinite Evils; no peace to the wicked; no peace to those who are so Wicked as to reject the glorious Gospel; and therefore thy Case is Dreadful.

Secondly, If the Blessing of the Gospel be returned from thee, then know, thou hast lost the most Happy opportunity of good that ever Creature had: Never can a Creature be made capable of a Happier opportunity of good than the Creature hath, when Jesus Christ comes to be preached to it. Here's the most Blessed opportunity of good I say that a Creature can have, to have Jesus Christ come to be offered to him. Now when the Gospel is returned, thou hast lost this opportunity of Mercy, the tender of Salvation that's worth ten thousand thousand Worlds; such an opportunity as the Devil and Damned

in Hell would give 10000 Worlds to have it; and yet that is come to thee, and is gone and lost; and therefore it is a sad thing for the Blessing of the Gospel to turn.

*Thirdly*, If it doth Return from thee, thou dost not know whether it will ever return back again upon thee; whether ever it will come any more: When God offers Grace and it is rejected, many times he doth cause the Offer to pass away, and it never comes more again. Thou mayest perhaps lye hereafter in the distress of thy Conscience, and think of former dayes that thou hadst, and cry out, O that I had such dayes again! O that I had Jesus Christ preached to me again as I had at such a time! O that I had such stirrings of the Spirit of God as I had at such a time! but now no Friend. Time was when thou hadst them, and thou didst reject them, and therefore they are gone; and thousands of Worlds will not purchase them again. I do not now speak only of taking away the Ministry of it, but of the Blessing of the Gospel; perhaps thou mayst live under the Ministry of it, and yet the Blessing of the Gospel may be returned.

*Fourthly*, If the Gospel come and return with the Blessing of it, thou art now in a far worse condition than any Heathen whatsoever; a Heathen is not in so sad a condition. Some times you will speak in way of Indignation, What do you think me a Heathen, a Turk? Thou art in a worse case than any Heathen whatsoever, because they never had the offer of Jesus Christ, and the course of Mercy hath never come to them, but to thee, and left thee; there's hope before God makes a tryal as it were; before Mercy hath as it were her turn upon the Creature, that it may belong to Gods Election; but now when

Mercy hath had her turn and left the Soul, then it is in a sad condition; it hath not done so to the Heathens, and therefore it is worse with thee than with the Heathens in that regard.

*Yea Fifthly*, Hence follows, that there is the greatest Judgment (except being sent to Hell it self immediatly) as a punishment of the greatest Sin that ever Creature committed, but only the unpardonable Sin, the Sin against the Holy Ghost: For God to take away the Gospel from us, the Blessing of it to return; it is the greatest Judgment that can befall a man in this World, except God should send him quick to Hell presently: A greater Judgment than if thy House were fired, or thy Body diseased and tormented; that were no such Judgment as this, and this is the fruit of the greatest sin, the sin of the rejection of the Gospel, except the sin against the Holy Ghost. Now that Man or Woman is in a sad condition that hath the greatest Judgment that God can inflict in this World, but only that one Excepted; I say this is an exceeding sad condition.

*Fifthly*, Yea further, Then it is to be feared lest Christ should dye in vain as for thee; though Christ hath come into the World, and shed his Blood to save Souls, yet all should be in vain as for thee, O this Thought will pierce thy heart one day, if it doth not now for the present; the very thought that there should be so great Salvation, and I not be made partaker of it, it is a Soule wounding Thought.

*Yea and Lastly*, Hereafter it shall be to thy extreme Torment, when thou shalt see others that have embrac'd the Gospel and Sav'd Eternally, and thou thy self cast out: I heard the same Sermon that Converted such and such a one, and they are now Saved in Heaven for ever; O I



was at the same Sermon; and rejecting of it am now cast down here to be sweltering under the wrath of God. Will not these be sad thoughts another day? *If not, your peace shall return;* and you see the dreadful Fruit of the returning of Peace.

Wherefore then a word by way of Application, For indeed the Point it self is enough to strike our Consciences. The very naming of these things, and the opening of them, hath power to stir and awaken the Heart; and therefore I will only say thus much.

Learn to know, that when you come to hear the preaching of the Gospel you do not come to a matter of Indifferency, it being no great matter whether you received it, or received it not: Many people they come to hear Sermons, and look upon them as a very indifferent matter whether their Hearts be taken with what they hear or no, whether they yield and submit to what they hear or not; but learn to know that it is not a matter of Indifferency: I may well make use of that Speech of Moses to the people in *Dent. 32. 46, 47. And he said unto them, set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your Children to observe to do, all the words of this Law: Mark it, Why, what's the matter? v. 47. For it is not a vain thing for you, because it is your life.* It may be some of them, when they heard Moses declaring the Law of God, they would be ready to think it is a good Law, and Moses doth well in telling of as the Law, but there is no great consequence of it how our Hearts be taken with it; O but saith Moses do not you come to hear the Law upon such terms, but set your Hearts upon what you hear; Why? because it is your life. Much more cause have the Ministers of the Gospel thus to lay when they

come to preach Jesus Christ to a people, Set your hearts to what is delivered. When they come and say, *Peace be to this place, to this People,* & the Doctrine of the Gospel be preached to them, O set your hearts to what is delivered: Why, for it is your life. When you come to Hear a Sermon, you should come so as to consider that your Life may lye upon that Sermon, for ought you know; and the rather look to it, because the Lord with whom you have to deal is a great God, and a God that will not be dallyed withal, and trifled withal; but if you disobey the Message of the Gospel, the Lord may deal very quick with you; and that let's me into the Last Point which now we are to finish this Text in, and that is this:

Doct.

*That those that shall not Entertain the Gospel, the Lord will deal very quick with them; Your Peace shall return again:* the Lord will not stand long about the matter. I in the naming of the point have already spoken of a Scripture or two, Now is the Axe lay'd to the root of the Trees, when John Baptist came to Preach the Kingdom of God. And that in the Last of Mark v. 16. Go and Preach faith Christ to his Disciples, *he that believes shall be saved, he that believes not shall be Damned:* The Lord Christ tells how quick the Lord will be with those that shall not entertain the Gospel; and there are many Texts that are very full for this purpose: and because it is a great Point, and that it should strike much upon your Consciences, therefore I will present it in the fulness of the Evidence of Scripture. That place that you have in *Matth. 10.* it is just parallel to this in *Luke 10.* there where Christ sends his Apostles forth, as he doth the 70. he gives the same Directions in effect; but mark here, *Saint Matthew* goes farther than *Saint Luke*, *Let your Peace be turned to you; and whatsoever shall not receive you, nor bend your*

your words, when you depart out of that House or City, shake off the dust of your feet: Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tollerable for the Land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of Judgment, than for that City. See here the quickness of God with those that do reject the Gospel: So in John 3. that is very famous for this in ver. 18. *He that believeth on him is not Condemned, but he that believeth not is Condemned already.* You will say he is Condemned already, because his Natural Condition is such that he is under Condemnation: No, but I take it, the Scripture doth aim at something further; He is not only Condemned by reason of his sins against the Law, but he is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the Name of the only Begotten Son of God. How could he Believe in the Name of the Only Begotten Son of God before ever he heard it; but here it is spoken of Light that is come into the World, for so it follows in ver. 19. *And this is the Condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light; because their deeds were evil:* That is, when Christ shall come to be preached to any People, and they will not believe; presently there is a sentence of Condemnation, that's the meaning of the Text, *he is Condemned already*, the Lord is very quick with such. And in Acts 17. 30. a place famous, *And the Times of this Ignorance God winked at.* He saw and would not see as it were, he overpast that; but *Now*, saith he, that is, *Now*, when Christ comes to be Preached, *Now he Commandeth all men every where to Repent;* as if he should say, Look to your selves that you Repent now, whatsoever you did before; though you could prophane Sabbaths before, look to your selves now, though you were van, and superstitious, and carnal, take heed

heed now to your selves; as if the Holy Ghost should say, The Lord is willing to pass by all that was before, but for rejection of his Son, look to that; he will not pass by that so easily, that *one* sin so easily, as he will pass by all the other. All the sins that men have Committed all their Lives before, may more easily be past by, than that one sin of Rejection of the offer of Grace by Jesus Christ: Now he calls *all men to Repentance*. And then a third Text is, that in 2 Cor. 2. a Text that I made use of the last Day for another purpose: *For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to the one we are the savour of Death unto Death*: What's the meaning of that? It is somewhat a strange phrase and expression, we are the savour of death unto death; *savour of death*: I take the meaning of the phrase to be thus: he compares his Ministry that was the Ministry of the Gospel, unto those things that had a mighty efficacy in them, a strong vertue; so strong, as their very savour was enough, either to kill or to make alive: As there are some things so strong, as the very sent of them can kill a man, or even raise a man from a Sound, so saith the Apostle, our Ministry to sin is the *savour of death unto death*; it is a deadly savour to them. Thus you may see that the Ministry of the Word, it hath a mighty quickness in it one way or other, either from Heaven or Hell, to Save or to Destroy. And another Scripture we have in Heb. 4. there the Apostle speaking of the Word, the Word of the Gospel, for certainly that's that that he speaks of, v. 12. *For the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joynts and Marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the Heart*. The Word of the Gospel whensoever it comes

to

to any Congregation, it is no dull matter; you may not look to sit dully under that, but it is a quick Word, it will either slay thy sin, or slay thy Soul, one of the two; it must slay one, and that quickly. And in *Heb. 6.* there the Apostle compares the Preaching of the Word of the Gospel to the Rain that comes down from Heaven upon the Ground: Now saith he in *v. 7.* *For the Earth which drinketh in the Rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth Herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth Blessing from God; but that which beareth Thorns and Bryars is rejected, and is nigh unto Cursing, whose end is to be burned.* So those people that do receive the Dews and Showers of the blessed Truths of the Gospel, and brings forth Fruit and Works meet for him that doth Dress them, and grants them such Showers; these shall receive Blessing from God: but mark *v. 8.* *But that which beareth Thorns and Bryars is rejected, and is nigh unto Cursing, whose end is to be burned:* That is, those people that live under the showers of the Gospel, and yet bring forth nothing but Bryars and Thorns, that is, wicked Works, they live prophanelly and ungodlily notwithstanding all the showers of the Word that comes upon them: Mark what the Text saith, *such a one is nigh unto Cursing*; he doth not say presently he is Cursed, no, not so; but he saith, *He is rejected, and is nigh to Cursing, whose end is to be burned*, that is, continuing so, his end is to be burnt. You will say, How long shall he continue so? No, he cannot continue long for the Text saith, *he is nigh to Cursing.* And in *Rev. 11.* you read there of the Witnesses, those Witnesses the Ministers of the Gospel especially that stood up to Witness for Christ; in *vers. 4.* they are called *Two Olive Trees*: The Ministers of the Gospel, for they are the special Witnesses to Christ, they are *Two Olive Trees*, that  
is,



is, they bring Peace to people. Do not think that these things can any ways contradict what was said before, they do bring peace; and because their Message of peace is such a blessed Message, therefore, it is that the Lord is so severe against those that do reject it. They are as Olive-trees to bear the Emblem of Peace, and as Candlesticks standing before the God of the Earth; but then mark in *vers. 5. If any man will hurt them; if any man will oppose them, fire proceedeth out of their mouths and devoureth their Enemies; and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed*: They are Olive-trees, they come and bring peace; but if they be opposed and hurt, then even fire comes out of their mouths: It is strange that those that are Olive-branches should have fire in their mouths. The Witnesses of Christ they are Olive-branches that have the Message of peace, but if they be opposed and rejected, and hurt, then fire comes out of their mouths and devours their Enemies: By this fire is meant the Ministry of their Word, the Lord makes it be as a consuming Fire to the Souls of those that shall reject their Ministry; and that you may see Gods quickness in dealing with those that he calls to Repentance, and offers any Mercy to; you have in the Old Testament somewhat: but in the Old Testament the Lord never revealed his Grace so clearly, and therefore we cannot expect so much of Gods quickness there as in the New; and yet mark what he saith in *Jer. 18. 9. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a Nation, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my Voice, then will I repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them*: If I come and speak unto a Nation, and offer them Mercy, and tell them of my Grace, if that Nation doth evil in my sight, at that very instant when I speak, if they

do not turn from their evil wayes, I will repent of all the good, and I will take all my goodness from them. You see that God expects to have you at an instant: You many times would have your Children and Servants come as soon as you do call, or else you are ready to fly in their Faces; certainly God may justly expect that at what instance he should call, that you should come in. The Lord may be too quick for you, your day may be past, the day of Grace and Salvation may be past, I say before you are aware; before your repenting time comes, Gods forgiving time may be past: Though it is true, you will say, At what time a man repents, I, that is, if God give him a heart: But what if God will not give thee a heart, but will harden thy heart, and give thee up to thy self? at *what instant* saith the Text: And then another Text is in *Mal. 3.* beginning, *Behold I will send my Messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his Temple:* Now this is apparently meant concerning Christ; but saith he, *Who may abide the day of his coming?* so he goes on and shews how severe he will be: and then in *vers. 5.* *I will come near to you to Judgement, and I will be a swift witness against the Sorcerers, and against the Adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the Hireling in his gates, &c.* Christ when he comes, he comes to be a swift Witness against them that live in their Wicked wayes after his coming. Indeed all mens sins do witness against them, but now those that live in Prophaneness and Wickedness, when Christ is come among them, I say they are to expect Christ to be a swift Witness against them. How quick did the Lord deal with his People upon their rejection of the Land of *Canaan*, they did often sin against God in the Wilderness,

but when they came to the Land of *Canaan*, and had an offer of the Land of *Canaan*, having sent Spies to see the good Land, and they came and declared what a Good Land it was; and yet some discouraging of them, because of the Children of *Anack*, they were Rebellious; and would not go to the Land to enter upon it because of the difficulty they should endure; No, God presently Swears against them, he takes a Solemn Oath, *that they should never Enter into his Rest*; so you have it in *Heb. 4.* God did never Swear against them, till they came to have the proffer of the Land; and upon their first rejection of it after the Offer, and declaring to them the good Fruit of it, upon the very first rejection, the Lord Swears in his Wrath that they should not Enter into it; and so they were to turn back again into the Wilderness. Now we are to know this Land of *Canaan* to be a Type, not only of the Church, but of Heaven itself, and of the good thing of the Gospel. Now those that live in the Wilderness, and do not know the good Land of *Canaan*, and have not the Offer of it, the Lord may bear a long time with them; but now when it comes to this, that the Lord doth reveal unto them the Blessed things of Christ, and make an Offer to them of the Blessed things of Christ, to *enter into his Rest*, for so it is apparent that the Apostle doth apply it to the Blessed things of the Gospel: If I say when the Lord shall discover these things unto them, they *shall not Enter into this Rest*, but they shall pretend a great many difficulties, O the Way is so strict and hard, and they shall suffer so much; and upon this do refuse the Land of *Canaan*, the Blessed things of Jesus Christ; then is the time if ever, to Swear against a Soul that it shall never be made partaker of Jesus Christ.

Now

Now then I had thought to have opened the Point further, in three Particulars: *First*, to shew what the dealings of God doth use to be with such, in what way he deals so quick with them; Secondly the Reasons of it; and Thirdly to have Answered some Objections about this: but I shall give you but a Word or two of each, and so come to the Application.

For the *First*, The way of Gods dealing with such; it is either as you heard the last Day, to take away the Ministry from them, that he doth sometimes, or if not so, the Lord passes a sentence against them, *They shall not taste of my Supper*: and so a man may live a long time under the Ministry of the Word, under a Sentence.

Or further, That sometimes the Lord gives him up to himself, to his own hearts lusts; for this the Gospel is the Counsel of God, for so it is called in one of the Evangelists: Now mark what Gods dealings was with those that rejected but his Counsels, in *Psalms 81. I gave them up to their own hearts lusts, and they walked in their own counsels*. And that famous place in *Rom. 1.* from the middle of it, there the Apostle shews that those that did reject but the very light of Nature, God gave them up to a Reprobate sense; much more those that shall reject the light of the Gospel: that's the way of God to give them up sometimes to the power of their sin; as if God should say, they will have none of Christ, nor of my Grace and Mercy, their Hearts are set upon their Lusts, Lust take them, such a lust of uncleanness take them, such an earthly Lust take full possession of them. The Lord gives them up to their own Hearts Lusts, the Lord saith of them, *He that will be filthy, let him be filthy still*, as you have it in *Revelations* the last, *he that will be filthy, let him be filthy*.

thy; and let him have the satisfying of his Lusts to the uttermost.

And sometimes it is to cut them off by some extraordinary and fearful Judgment, the Lord many times appears most dreadfully against them.

The Reasons that should have spent me a great part of the time, and it might very well require a whole Exercise, to have Opened to you why the Lord is so provok'd against this Sin rather than another Sin whatsoever it be: For the Opening of the great Evil that there is in the Sin of Unbelief and Rejection of the Gospel; you that understand any thing must needs know that it must require a very large time to open it all: But in a very few Particulars take them thus.

You that reject the Gospel, you sin against the greatest Mercy that ever God tendred to Creatures; he never tendred such a Mercy to the Angels that sinned against him as to you: Indeed here are the *bowels of Gods mercy*, as the Scripture calls them, *the tender bowels of Gods mercy*: Now to sin against the Gospel, it is to spurn at the very Bowels of God. Many men speak of Mercy, and desire to hear much of Mercy, O but you had need look to your selves when you hear much of Mercy, for when you hear of Mercy your Souls lye at the stake one way or other: God deals more quick with those that hear much of Mercy, than he doth with others. One Sermon of Mercy rejected may send a man nearer to Hell by far, than ten Sermons of Judgment. Though you should not reform after many Sermons of Judgment, yet they do not make your condition so dangerous as one Sermon of Mercy; and therefore you had need at any time when you hear Mercy Opened to you, you had need have your Hearts shake the more, and tremble to think thus, Lord  
here's



here's a Sermon upon which my Soul doth more lye, than it may be Ten Sermons before, yea perhaps than any that ever I heard in all my life. Thou comest to hear a Sermon of Mercy, and goest away and sayest, O what an Excellent Sermon is this! it was a Sermon of the most Mercy that ever I heard in my life; I say, Was it so? then thy Soul lay more upon that Sermon than upon any that ever thou heardest in thy life. Mercy is such an Attribute which God doth put such a price upon, that it is resolved he will revenge the Wrong done to his Mercy: Whatsoever God doth bear with, he is resolved he will not bear the Abuse of his Mercy; and therefore you had need look to it when you come to hear of Mercy, especially the Mercy of the Gospel. There is a great deal of Mercy in Gods Works, I but when he comes to Preach J<sup>e</sup>sus Christ to thee, there's Mercy of another Nature, there look to thy self: If thou dost dally and trifle with Gods Mercy, then thy condition will be most Dreadful. I'll name thele one or two Arguments to thee, because when thou sinnest against the Offer of the Gospel, then thou sinnest against the help of thy Soul, the means to do thee good. The preaching of the Gospel it is as a Board after Shipwrack, for every poor Soul is as a man that hath suffered Shipwrack, and he is in the midst of the Sea upon a Board of the Ship, and there's all his help: Now were it not a mad thing for this man to put off this Plank from him when he hath no other help. Now we are ready to be swallowed up of the Sea of Gods Wrath, and now God casts in a Plank to waite us to the Shore, if possibly may be. Or rather thus, The Offer of the Gospel it is like the casting of a Rope into a River, unto a man that is in danger of Drowning. There is a man that is fallen into the Thames, and you cannot get him up, but you will get a

Line

line and throw it into the place where he sunk, and there is no way for him to be Sav'd, but only that: Now if such a man put off the time from him, what help can there be of that man. Thus it is, all Men and Women naturally, they are even ready to sink into the Bottomless Gulf of Eternal Misery; this is thy condition. Now the Lord in Mercy sends his Ministers to come and make an Offer of the Gospel, and cast a line to Congregations, and make this Proclamation, In the Name of God, every Soul that will take hold of this, may be saved from sinking into the bottomless Gulf of Eternal Horror and Despair; and there is no way to save any sinking Soul but only this. Now if men slight and disregard this, and put it off, is it not just that men should sink down; this that I speak will be found good one day: the Lord forbid that any one Soul in this Place should find this similitude made good upon them; that is, to sink into the bottomless Gulf: and there to consider with himself, had not I a line cast to me for the Saving of me, and had I catch'd hold of it as others did, might not I have been Saved as well as they. This I say the Lord will make good one day.

But now, because much may be said, As doth not God call at the Eleventh hour and the like? And grant God may call at the eleventh hour, I but it is not said God will call eleven times? That is, God may let Men and Women go a long time, and at length call them; but what have you in Scripture after Rejection of Calls to Call again; do not mistake me, I do not say but that God may call eleven score times; I but it is more than such a one may expect: the Lord calls at the Eleventh hour: but you do not hear, if they refuse then, what he will do afterwards. So you say, That the Thief on the Cross was called at the last hour, but who knows whether ever he did

hear

hear of Jesus Christ before that time; therefore your case is not his, though it's true he was Saved at the last. I but it may be he did never reject Christ in his life, and it was the first time that ever Jesus Christ was made known to him for ought any can tell? and do you so? though you be old sinners, yet upon the offer of the Gospel if you shall presently come in; then you may be received; but what may be after the offer of the Gospel I cannot tell.

You will say, That we find by Experience, that God doth Convert those that lives a long time under Meanes; It's true he may be patient towards them, I but it is more than they can expect, that it should be so; and mark it, you must not venture upon Gods patience with another, to think that he will be patient so long with thee: I will give you a notable Scripture for that, the Example is in *Manasses*, in *2 Chron. 33. 1.* there you have the Story of *Manasses*, how wicked a man he was; and *Manasses* did Reign Fifty five Years, though he were a very Wicked man, yet the Lord suffered him to Reign Fifty five Years, and it is like most of this time was in his Wickedness: but now comes his Son *Amon* after him *o. 21.* and perhaps *Amon* he might think thus; Why may not I do as my Father did? The Lord was patient with my Father many Years, and why may not I venture as he did? and so he did venture to live in the Wickedness that his Father had lived in; but mark, God was quick with him; though he spared *Manasses* the Father, yet he was quick with *Amon* the Son, in *vers. 24.* God spared him but Two Years, for he died Wickedly, as the Story shews you afterwards; so that you must know Gods patience is his own. God may be patient with one perhaps Twen-

ty or thirty Years, and he will not with another so many moneths.

*Appl.*

Wherefore then by way of Application, thus much:

*First*, Hence Ministers may see cause when they come to Preach Jesus Christ to a People, to come with trembling hearts; and the truth is, though it be that that their Souls desire above all, and they account themselves (or should do) in their Element, when they are opening Jesus Christ unto you; yet upon the Consideration of this Point, they cannot Preach Christ unto you without trembling Hearts; for they have these thoughts whatsoever you have, Lord I am now going to Preach Christ, and open the Mysteries of Grace to this People; I but if they should reject it, how quick will the Lord Deal with them; the Ministry of my Word, How soon may it be to cut them down, and to send them to their own places? Therefore those that know what they do, cannot but come with Trembling Hearts.

*Secondly*, From hence, Let all those that have liv'd under the Gospel, and yet the Lord hath been patient towards them for a long time, O let them learn to Bless the Name of God: I perhaps was Born of Godly Parents, and they instill'd good Principles into me, and they were careful to set me under good Preaching, yea and I not only had the outward Offer of Grace, but God knows how often Gods Spirit came & offered Christ to my Soul, and yet I went on stubbornly and stoutly a long time. O the rich Mercy of God, that he did not wholly give me up, and cut me off! Rich Mercy! And what hath God yet come and strove with me again for all this Rejection? O the Riches of the Grace of God towards me more than towards others! Thou hast cause to magnifie God, for it is not an ordinary thing for God to deal so with People as he hath dealt with thee.

*Thirdly*,

*Thirdly*, Let all those that do come to hear the Ministry of the Gospel, to hear the Word of the Gospel, and yet their Consciences tell them that they are Opposers of it, and secret Contemners of it, and are resolved to go on in their wayes, let there be said what will be, yet they resolve to go on, and to continue as Vile as formerly : O that the Lord would strike some such bold Sinner this Day by this Word. By this Point that hath been thus Preached unto thee, the Lord strike thy Heart thou bold Sinner that darest be bold even against the face of the Mercy of God in Jesus Christ, that darest be bold to kick as it were God in his Bowels : If the Lord hath any purpose to do good unto thee, he will strike thy Heart, and humble thee before him, in that that thou hast gone on thus against so much rich Grace as thou hast done ; as *Jesus* said in another case, *What hast thou to do with Peace, get thee behind me* : So is God a Merciful God, and the Preacher Preaches Mercy ; howsoever thou wilt live in the face of the Mercy of God in thy wicked wayes, What hast thou to do with Mercy ? Now if this be so, Harken to the Exhortation in the Second *Psalme*, *Kiss the Son lest he be angry* ; there indeed lies the Emphasis, *Kiss the Son* saith the *Psalmist* : What shall the Son of God, that is Jesus Christ, come to be Preached to you, and do you reject him ? No, take heed what you do, *Kiss him* ; and that expression it is a sign of Obedience, for so it was used in those times, they came and Kiss'd the Prince as a sign of their Subjection to him : *Kiss the Son*, Obey the Gospel, submit to it, Why ? *lest he be angry* ; lest the Son of God be angry : The anger of the Son of God is a dreadful anger ; the Anger of God the Father is dreadful, and yet the Anger of the Son of God in some respect is more dreadful ; as the Anger of the Holy Ghost is most dreadful of all, because the Scrip-



ture saith, *The sin against him can never be forgiven.* And next, *Kiss the Son*, and that because there is so much Mercy in the Son; therefore if he be rejected; his anger is so much the more dreadful, *And lest you perish in the mid-way*; that is, when you hope to live many years, to have many more Merry-meetings with your Companions, and do not think your selves to be nigh to perishing; saith the Text, *In the mid way*: the Lord comes upon such when they least think of it. The Lord comes upon many, and cuts them off in the middle of their years. This Consideration no question it was in part that caused Saint Paul when the Lord Christ was Revealed to him, that he dared not put off a day, no saith the Text, *Gal. 1. 15, 16. When it pleased God who separated me from my Mothers Womb, and called me by his Grace to reveal his Son in me, that I might Preach him among the Heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood*; immediately, as soon as ever God was pleased to reveal Christ to me, or in me, *I did not confer with flesh and blood*, that is, I dar'd not so much as Reason about the difficulty of the way, or what I should suffer if I took this course; I dar'd not go to my Company and take their Advice and Counsel, No, saith he, but as soon as ever the Lord was pleased to reveal Christ in me, I presently went about the Work; and so in the 26th. of the *Acts*, where he tells the story of his Conversion, speaking of Gods revealing himself to him in that glorious way of a Vision, *Whereupon O King Agrippa I was not disobedient to the Heavenly Vision*; the very first Vision I presently submitted to: Paul he fell down and said, *Lord what wilt thou have me to do?* upon the first manifestation of Christ unto him: O do you take heed that you be not disobedient to the Heavenly Vision; perhaps together with the Ministry of the Word the Lord may grant to some

some of your Souls a Vision, that is, he may come with his Spirit and shew some of the Glory of his Son to you; O be not disobedient to the Heavenly Vision, but immediately yield to it, and confer not with flesh and blood.

O but you will say this is hard, you come at first and say Peace to us, but this is very severe to tell us how quick the Lord is.

But Observe it, It is but severity to those that put off Mercy: then if you love Mercy so well, what need you fear this Severity.

But further, Know that upon your receiving of the Gospel the Lord will be as quick with you in wayes of Mercy, as he is in Judgments to those that do reject it. You will say, How quick will the Lord be in the wayes of his Mercy? Thus quick, that upon thy receiving the Gospel, and Believing, the very first instant of thy receiving it, thou shalt be delivered from all thy sin, the guilt of all thy sin, thou shalt be made as clear from the guilt of sin as the Child that is new born, and more clear a great deal: How quick is God now.

Yea thou shalt be made as clear from the guilt of all thy great sins that thou hast committed, I say as clear from the guilt of them as the Saints are in Heaven, and this at the first moment of thy Entertaining of Jesus Christ; thou shalt be as clear as *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*; thou shalt be equal with *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob* in the point of thy Justification; yea in regard of any guilt of sin, thou shalt be as unspotted before the Lord as the Saints are in Heaven: O the Lord is willing to be quick with you in wayes of Mercy.

Now then consider of both, Here we set Life and Death before you; we know it is not in Mens power indeed,

but we know God doth use to Bless his Ministry: so as to convey power by his Ministry: God is quick both wayes; upon Entertaining he is quick in wayes of Mercy, presently to clear the Soul from all those horrible Wicked Sins that thou hast been guilty of; and if thou shalt reject it, then thou may'st fear that the Lord will be quick with thee another way. O consider what hath been said in this Point, and in this Text, and the Lord give you understanding.

---

*FINIS.*

---

